



NAVY NEWS

MARCH 2015

Taking flight

UK's first F-35 squadron forms

Gallipoli victory

Revamp for WW1 survivor

FORCE MAJEURE

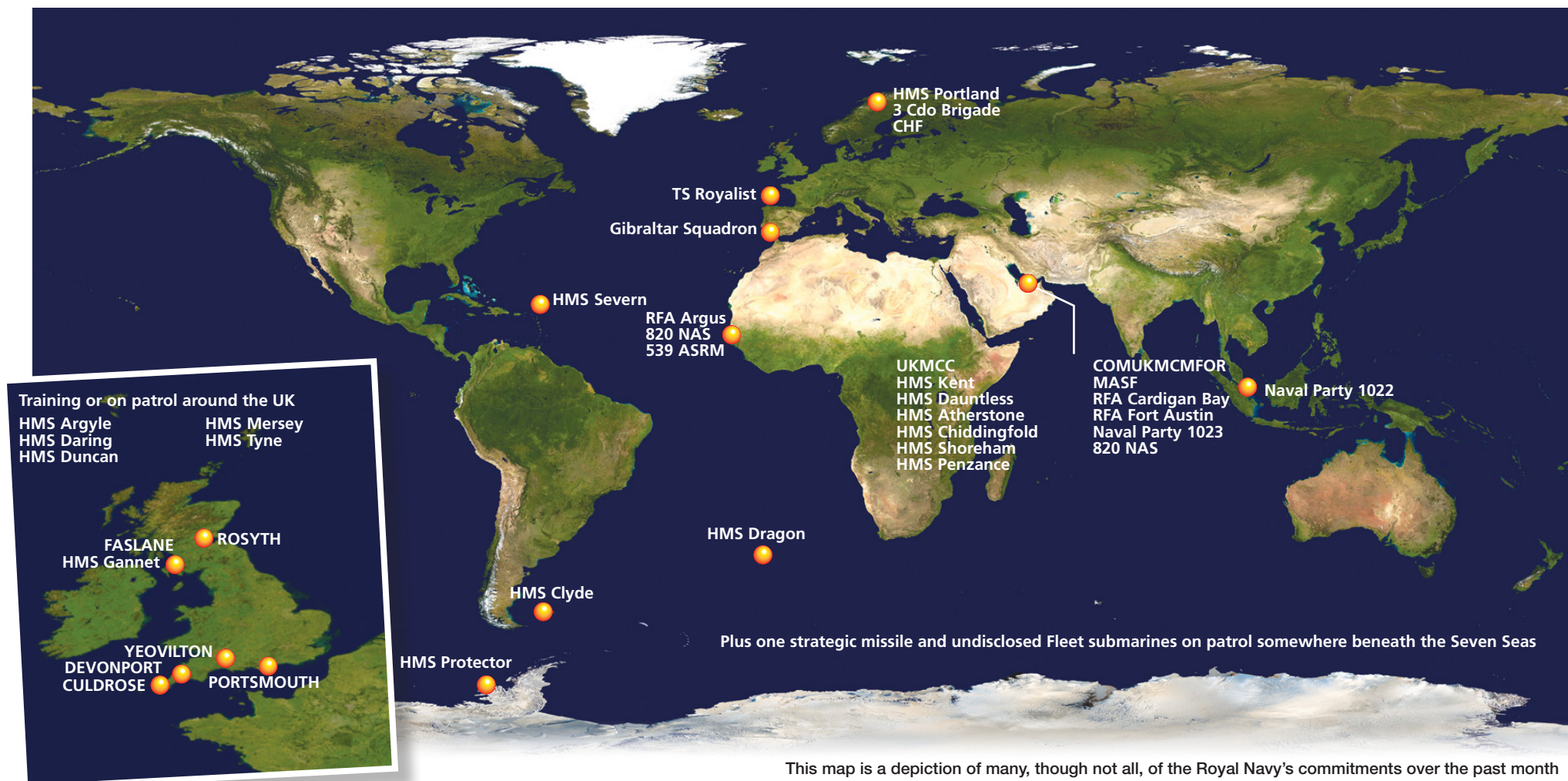
● HMS Kent powers through the Red Sea to join France's flagship FS Charles de Gaulle as the Portsmouth-based frigate takes her place as an integral part of the carrier's battle group. See pages 4-5 for details.

Picture: LA(Phot) Simmo Simpson



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This map is a depiction of many, though not all, of the Royal Navy's commitments over the past month

PAST, present and future – this month's *Navy News* has it all – including the final Wings parade for Lynx and Sea King pilots, current deployments, and a look at the Royal Navy's future carrier capability.

The new Queen Elizabeth-class carriers have caught the imagination of those within and beyond the Royal Navy (see pages 20-21). **HMS Queen Elizabeth** and **Prince of Wales** are being fitted out and built on firm, well-proven foundations that have been developed over decades.

Preparations for the carrier age are not just confined to Rosyth though. In **RNAS Culdrose** in Cornwall the RN School of Flight Deck Operations are using their 'dummy deck' to safely marshall the multi-million-pound Lightning II aircraft around a flight deck, launch them, and recover them (see page 8).

While in the USA, the UK's **F-35B** strike fighter programme achieved another milestone as 17(R) Squadron stood up at Edwards Air Force Base (see page 19), where the aircraft will be put through its paces before arriving in the UK.

Back in Britain and **RNAS Yeovilton** saw the last of the Royal Navy's Lynx and Sea King aircrew receive their Wings (see page 10) from the Duke of York, Commodore in Chief of the Fleet Air Arm and a former pilot of both helicopters.

Staying with helicopters, the **Commando Helicopter Force** returned to a rain-soaked Salisbury Plain for an exercise called Merlin Storm 2 – but with Sea Kings rather than Merlins (see page 10).

In sunnier climes is **HMS Severn** as she island hops in the Caribbean (see page 3). Her latest visit was to Montserrat, where she helped with a tsunami disaster exercise.

HMS Protector continues her Antarctic patrol by moving international inspectors around mostly inaccessible sites (see page 7). Legal, environmental and scientific experts joined the vessel to ensure the terms of the Antarctic Treaty are being upheld by research stations, cruise ships and yachts.

In the Falkland Islands the crew of **HMS Dragon** stopped to pay tribute to those who lost their lives in HMS Coventry and HMS Sheffield during the 1982 conflict (see page 6).

In West Africa blood from British sailors is being used for the first time to fight the deadly Ebola virus (see page 6). Two Royal Navy nurses set up a volunteer emergency blood donor clinic aboard **RFA Argus** off Sierra Leone.

In the Middle East **HMS Dauntless** joined the battle group of the USS Carl Vinson in the struggle against ISIL while HMS Kent worked with the French carrier Charles de Gaulle (see pages 4 and 5). The Portsmouth-based Type 45 is providing protection to the Vinson as she carries out strikes against ISIL and supports broader efforts to ensure security at sea in the region.

Also in the Gulf was **HMS Chiddingfold**, which found a live depth charge during a minehunting exercise with the US Navy (see page 16). Chid, along with Atherstone and Shoreham, spent a week with US minehunters Dextrous and Devastator.

Back in the UK and the **Northern Diving Group** were put through their paces at HMNB Clyde during a four-day exercise based on rescuing a trapped submarine crew (see page 15).

Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Sir David Steel looks back on his time as the RN's senior people person as he prepares to leave the Senior Service after 36 years (see page 17).

A Naval Education and Training Service Officer from **FOST** gives a glimpse of life supporting personnel (see page 14).

Finally, the only surviving British ship from the Gallipoli Campaign, **M33**, will open to give visitors a glimpse of life aboard (see page 18).

Following the bear

ROYAL Navy frigate HMS Argyll keeps a close eye on a Russian warship after intercepting her in the English Channel.

The Type 23, fitted with advanced Artisan radar, used her Lynx helicopter and sensors to track the frigate Yaroslav Mudry in the latest encounter with Russian vessels.

HMS Argyll is the Fleet Ready Escort – a warship maintained at high readiness for tasks in UK waters – and took over surveillance of the Baltic Fleet vessel off the coast of France.

The Yaroslav Mudry, a Neustrashimy-class frigate, was accompanied by a tanker, the Kola, for the journey back to her homeport of Baltiysk.

Named after one of the ancient founders of Russia, the ship left her home in August last year and has visited nine countries: Ceuta in Spain, Valletta (Malta), Karachi (Pakistan), Jakarta (Indonesia), Penang (Malaysia), Colombo (Sri Lanka), Salalah (Oman), Cyprus and Syria.

In November last year HMSTyne escorted a convoy of Russian warships through the North Sea and into the English Channel. The four ships, led by anti-submarine frigate Severomorsk, were undertaking a series of exercises.

And last summer HMS Severn intercepted two Russian assault ships hours after HMS Montrose was sent to track a Russian warship off the Danish coast. HMS

Dragon also escorted the Russian aircraft carrier Admiral Kuznetsov as it approached the UK in the North Sea.

Cdr Paul Hammond, Commanding Officer of HMS Argyll, said: "We are one of the Royal Navy's high-readiness ships and we knew we could be called upon to respond to a range of duties, such as monitoring a Russian warship, at short notice."

"The vast majority of the ship's company, myself included, returned from a highly successful Atlantic Patrol Task (North) deployment just before Christmas. To be ready to undertake this duty – after a short period of leave and maintenance – is testament to their hard work and the capability of this ship."



Swords of honour for aid mission

DEEDS in the Philippines at the end of 2013 earned HMS Daring and Illustrious the military's ultimate award for peace and goodwill.

First the destroyer and later the carrier spent around a month helping devastated island communities rebuild their lives.

Collectively, the two ships helped more than 22,000 people in November and December 2013 – efforts which have earned the vessels the Firmin Sword of Peace.

Typhoon Haiyan steamrolled through a swath of islands large and small some 200 miles south of the Filipino capital with winds as strong as 175mph wrecking homes, schools, businesses, amenities and fishing vessels.

Destroyer HMS Daring broke off from exercises in the South China Sea to dash to the country's aid followed by HMS

Illustrious, which had been carrying out anti-piracy sweeps off the Horn of Africa.

When she arrived, Daring was the only rescue asset available in the Visayan Sea and used her Lynx helicopter to search an area five times the size of Wales to pinpoint the communities most in need of assistance.

Her sailors, bolstered by British government international aid experts and charities, delivered food and shelter packs, set up mobile clinics treating more than 300 Filipinos, repaired fishing vessels, put roofs back on schools and community centres and helped to restore water supplies.

"Daring made a tremendously positive impact globally in the first circumnavigation by a Type 45 destroyer, but if a single act could typify the spirit of the team it would undoubtedly be the humanitarian disaster

relief effort in the Philippines following Typhoon Haiyan," said Commander Philip Dennis, the Portsmouth-based warship's Commanding Officer.

Illustrious did much the same job when she reached the Philippines – but on a much larger scale given her size, number of helicopters, and the 1,100 sailors, soldiers and RAF personnel aboard.

"In sweltering heat and humidity, sailors, Royal Marines, Royal Engineers and Royal Air Force lived and worked tirelessly alongside the islanders," said Illustrious' citation.

It proved to be the last operational act of the carrier's three-decade career – she paid off last summer – and it earned her a special collective Firmin Sword of Peace for all three Armed Forces, while Daring receives the same title on behalf of the Royal Navy.



● HMS Severn, second left, with the USS Kauffman, USAV Matamoros and USNS Grasp at Key West; Severn in Grand Cayman; The ship's seaboat works with the Montserrat Police

Severn seize the day

HMS SEVERN helped the residents of Montserrat deal with the aftermath of a five-metre tsunami.

The ship's disaster reconnaissance team went ashore to build a command centre and assess the damage while Commanding Officer Lt Cdr Steven Banfield helped official agencies with disaster management and maritime security issues.

Fortunately for the British Overseas Territory the tsunami was just an exercise – the first such one to be held on the Caribbean island.

In the scenario the giant wave caused extensive damage to the coastline, destroying roads and buildings and rendering much of the port at Little Bay out of action.

Lt Cdr Banfield and Logistics Officer Lt Roger Filewod assisted local authorities from a planning point of view, discussing the capabilities that HMS Severn could provide in such an event.

During the visit to Montserrat, members of the island fire brigade toured Severn to learn about maritime firefighting.

The patrol ship also provided navigation training for the Royal Montserrat Police Force marine unit, additionally sending some engineers to assist with the maintenance of their police patrol vessel, the MV Shamrock.

HMS Severn's seaboat, along with the Shamrock, also conducted a joint inshore patrol, before offloading members of the ship's company into the ruined former capital city, Plymouth, to give a maritime view to help assess potential drop off-sites for drug runners.

The ship's Medical Officer, Surg Lt Sophie Hawkes and LMA Chris Turner also went ashore during the visit to provide first-aid training with the Montserrat Red Cross Organisation.

Thirty-one Island volunteers



● Severn's Surg Lt Sophie Hawkes conducts training; LS(CIS) Jed Stone tests his comms kit; A young visitor to the ship



attended the training session and were all presented with a Certificate of Attendance on completion of the joint training.

PO 'Kiwi' Wilkinson was an eager volunteer to visit the Montserrat Library, where he spoke to local children about life on the high seas in the Royal Navy and donated a large bag of books from the ship.

Sixteen crew members visited the Montserrat Volcano Observatory and toured the island, seeing the devastation of the 1990s' volcanic event and impact of the pyroclastic flows which devastated Plymouth and resulted in a third of the island becoming out of bounds.

A small group of hikers spent half a day following local trails, and one evening saw members of the ship's company take part in the Montserrat Pop Idol competition at the local beach.

Earlier in her deployment HMS Severn visited Grand Cayman, where Sub Lt Matthew Smith and Chef Rebeca

Deacon attended a cookery event and saw Adam Handling, a finalist in the 2013 professional *Masterchef* contest, show off his culinary skills.

Mr Handling then visited Severn to see how two chefs catered for 35 sailors every day plus providing food for up to 100 guests at receptions two or three times a week.

The heat of the kitchen followed the heat of firefighting demonstrations during the Portsmouth-based ship's visit to Anguilla.

The River-class offshore patrol vessel hosted the Anguillan Fisheries Department as well as island firefighters during her second visit to the island in two months.

"It was a perfect opportunity to discuss and compare the legislation, tactics and techniques used by the Royal Navy and the Anguillan Fisheries Department in enforcing fishing laws," said Lt Luke Thompson, one of Severn's fisheries officers.

Her deployment also saw HMS Severn call in at St Lucia – the first visit made by a Royal Navy ship in a number of years.

A number of islanders attended a capability demonstration in Castries Port before eight sailors helped to repaint the St Lucia Blind Welfare Association building.

The ship's company hosted groups of schoolchildren while the Marine Engineering department spent time with the St Lucian Marine Police, learning about some of the effects of the Caribbean climate on the engineering aspects of boat operations.

HMS Severn's football and rugby teams took on local sides, losing in both sports before the visit culminated in a training exercise with the St Lucia Fire Service.

Chief of the Fire Service Lambert Charles said: "The training today has been invaluable. The expertise on board HMS Severn has enabled

my team to understand the unique nature of firefighting on board the ship – something which we have not had before."

HMS Severn also visited Bridgetown in Barbados and met up with one of her affiliates.

The Worshipful Company of Security Professionals, holidaying on the island, attended a reception aboard the ship, during which Air Cdre Stephen Anderton, a junior warden of the company, presented Lt Cdr Banfield with a certificate of military affiliation to formalise the ship's association with the company.

During an earlier visit to Key West, HMS Severn conducted briefings with the Joint Inter-Agency Task Force (South), a US Coast Guard-led regional maritime security organisation that focuses on catching drug smugglers.

HMS Severn also visited Nassau in the Bahamas where she was escorted into harbour by the Bahamian ship Leon Livingstone Smith, a new Daimen-class offshore patrol vessel.

Reciprocal tours were held on both ships culminating in a basic set of officer-of-the-watch manoeuvres.

Severn's navigating officer Lt Ben Read said: "The simple manoeuvres we carried out with the Bahamian Coast Guard have proved that our forces can work together to achieve safe, mutually beneficial training."

During the visit Lt Cdr Banfield met local dignitaries and officials from the Royal Bahamas Defence Force and US Coast Guard and discussed maritime security in the Bahamas and the wider region.

During her deployment, which ends in July, Severn – which normally patrols UK coastal waters – is tackling drug smugglers, assisting in the event of natural disasters and providing reassurance to overseas territories.



● The sun sets on HMS Severn as she sits at anchor in Little Bay, Montserrat, surrounded by pleasure craft



New head for UK task force

CDRE Martin Connell has assumed command of the nation's amphibious task group, taking the reins from Cdre Jerry Kyd as the latter paves the way for the future carriers.

Like Cdre Kyd before him, Cdre Connell (pictured) is a former CO of HMS Illustrious.

As Commander UK Task Group, he'll be responsible for directing the Royal Navy's Response Force Task Group – the on-call force of ships, submarines and Royal Marines, currently spearheaded by Britain's flagship, HMS Bulwark.

The task group is designed to respond to rapidly unfolding world crises. It has been activated twice in recent years – in 2011 HMS Ocean sailed to assist in the international response to the Libya crisis and in 2013 HMS Illustrious took tonnes of aid to the Philippines following a devastating typhoon.

Already named as the first commanding officer of HMS Queen Elizabeth, Cdre Kyd will spend the time before the new carrier goes to sea visiting other 'big deck' navies to see how they operate carrier task groups of a size and potency the RN hasn't wielded before.

Busy January for Gannet

THE RN's Search and Rescue helicopters of HMS Gannet at had one of their busiest opening months of the year on record.

The Sea King of 177 Flight was scrambled 32 times – up from 18 'shouts' in the same month in 2014 – representing a quarter of all military SAR taskings (127) around the eight military bases in January.

RAF Chivenor in Devon was the next most active, with 21 rescues.

"These figures are a true testament to the professionalism and determination not only of the aircrew who attend each rescue, but also the maintenance and support staff who keep our helicopters ready to fly at a moment's notice," said Gannet's CO Lt Cdr Charlie Fuller.

T26s to split their homes

THE RN's next-generation frigates will be split between Portsmouth and Devonport when in their home bases – like the ships they replace.

Visiting Portsmouth Naval Base to announce a new national shipbuilding strategy ahead of a decision later this year on orders for the Type 26 Global Combat Ship, Chancellor George Osborne said the new vessels would be shared by the RN's South Coast bases.

The 26s are due to enter service early next decade as the 13 Type 23 frigates they succeed begin to pay off.

Charles, Carl and

THAT'S de Gaulle, Vinson and Philip Arthur George, if you were wondering.

And we've not touched on pirates. Or terrorists. Or a Britpop soundtrack.

Such was the variety offered by the opening weeks of 2014 for the RN's two largest surface ships east of Suez – destroyer HMS Dauntless and HMS Kent.

Both turned their hand to international efforts to sweep piracy, smuggling, drug running and other illegal trades which fund terrorism from the surface of the Indian Ocean.

And both have now taken their places as integral parts of carrier battle groups: Kent with the pride of France, FS Charles de Gaulle, Dauntless with 100,000 tons of heavy metal thunder in the form of the mighty USS Carl Vinson.

The latter has been launching air strikes against the forces of ISIL since before Christmas, a mission given a typically tubthumping codename by the US military (Inherent Resolve) and an equally-forceful goal ("to degrade and ultimately destroy ISIL").

The Vinson weighs into this effort with 49 fast jets (chiefly Hornets and Super Hornets), more than 20 helicopters, and four AWACs early warning aircraft.

Dauntless' role in this mission is defensive: to provide warning of – and protection against – any threats in the air, exactly as she and her sister Type 45 destroyers were designed to do.

Taking over from her sister HMS Defender – which performed the same role before Christmas both with the Vinson and before her the USS George H W Bush – Dauntless' suite of sensors and radars can track hundreds of contacts in the skies of the Middle East up to around 250 miles away.

And should any real threat to Carrier Strike Group 1 emerge,

her Sea Viper missiles can intercept incoming targets up to 75 miles away, manoeuvring in for the kill at four times the speed of sound and G forces no human could endure.

"Dauntless was designed to protect an aircraft carrier against threats from the air," explained the destroyer's CO Cdr Adrian Fryer, "so my ship's company and I are proud to be able to bring our world-class air defence systems to the Gulf to fulfil our primary role in support of the USS Carl Vinson."

"We have trained incredibly hard and it is a credit to the determination of the men and women in HMS Dauntless that they overcome any hurdle put in front of them."

After leaving her native Portsmouth between Christmas and the new year, D33 spent the journey eastwards flashing up all her systems and keeping the 200 sailors and Royal Marines on board fully trained, such as practice shoots involving her Phalanx automated Gatling gun, board-and-search work-outs for her Lynx helicopter (callsign 'Nemesis') and commando/Navy boarding team.

The destroyer's first task in theatre was to take her place in Combined Task Force 150, committed to dealing with terrorist operations – gun-running, smuggling, drugs trafficking – in waters which include three of the world's six maritime chokepoints.

Normally the ships assigned to CTF150 operate independently, but with a common goal, spread across hundreds of miles of ocean.

For a short while, however, the force came together – Dauntless, Australian 'battle tanker' HMAS Success, American destroyer USS Dewey and patrol boat USS Firebolt, plus US Coast Guard Cutter Maui – for a rare group photograph.

Before Dauntless briefly took her place in the group as she headed for the link-up



● Prince Charles enjoys a chuckle with CPO(ETME) Ben Cornwell and AB Ted aboard Dauntless

DAUNTLESS' first break from operations with the Carl Vinson came in Kuwait, where the ship hosted Prince Charles – half-way through his whistle-stop tour of the Middle East.

"I was really excited to be part of the Royal Guard and couldn't believe it when Prince Charles spoke to me," said warfare specialist AB Dani Hobbs.

"He asked about how long I've been onboard and what department I work for. My friends won't believe me when I tell them about it – but that's just typical of life in the Royal Navy: one minute we're sailing alongside a massive US

Navy aircraft carrier launching jets and the next I'm chatting with the future king."

Dauntless' XO Lt Cdr Mike Klidjian added: "The prince made a point of chatting to as many of the sailors as possible, remembering the banter – which hasn't changed in 30 years – and wanting to know about what it was like to work on such a world-class destroyer. It was a huge honour to welcome him."

The heir to the throne was accompanied by First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas, paying his own visit to RN units deployed east of Suez.

with the Vinson, HMS Kent was assigned to the same force.

She availed herself of Australian hospitality while with 150, who offered fuel from the tanks of HMAS Success to fill those of Kent when the frigate was running a bit low.

The Aussie sailors provided a taste of home for Kent's sailors and Royal Marines, blaring out the Beatles, Stones and other Britrock classics '60s to the present day across the Indian Ocean.

Guiding Success' fuel probe safely into its receptor – known as a bell mouth – on Kent was LS Joel Minichiello, from Sydney.

"Working with the Royal Navy, is always a bit more relaxed and a good opportunity for a laugh," he said.

Success, described by our Antipodean cousins as a 'battle tanker' rather than pure tanker – bigger than the RFA's Rovers but smaller than their Waves – is supporting Operation Manitou, the Australian mission in the Middle East (codenamed Kipion by UK forces).

In just an hour, around 150 cubic metres of fuel – nearly 40,000 gallons, or enough to fill the tanks of over 2,700 family cars – were safely transferred to the British frigate, before she broke away.

Kent's CO Cdr Andrew Block described the exchange as very smart, professional – and entertaining.

"It was by far the most enjoyable replenishment we have had in months," he said on completion.

From 150, Kent headed west to switch task groups and concentrate on the scourge of 21st-Century piracy with Combined Task Force 151 and a concerted effort focussing on two of the narrowest – and most threatened – stretches of water in the Middle East: the Bab al Mandeb Strait – the narrows at the foot of the Red Sea – and the Gulf of Aden – dubbed 'pirate alley' due to the threat from modern-day buccaneers.

On any one day there are upwards of 3,000 ships, boats, dhows and skiffs plying their lawful trade in these waters.

As with efforts to curb terrorist activity, the struggle against piracy isn't just about storming 'pirate action groups', but involves a lot of building up



Charles again

a picture of daily goings-on in crowded waters.

Operating closely with the Yemeni Coast Guard, Kent sent her sailors and Royal Marines commandos out in sea boats to chat to seafarers in the BAM, as the Bab is known in common military parlance.

With the help of Yemeni officers, Kent's boarding teams explained how merchant vessels interpret the actions of small fishing skiffs when they sail too close to the huge commercial ships – it could be misinterpreted as a pirate attack and provoke a reaction from a ship's private security team.

In the midst of this picture building, with her Lynx helicopter and ScanEagle 'eyes in the sky' unmanned aircraft, Kent spotted a small vessel in trouble and immediately sent the sea boats to provide assistance.

PO 'Elkie' Brooks, one of the frigate's marine engineers, used his technical know-how to fix their outboard motor to send them on their way.

Ok, so we've had 150 and 151. So, you know what number is next.

That's right, 473.

For as Kent was finishing her time at the foot of the Red Sea, entering the same waters 1,200 miles to the north (that's twice the length of the UK) was Task Force 473, the battle group of FS Charles de Gaulle.

The French *porte-avions* and her escorts left home in Toulon in mid-January on their Arromanches deployment to the Middle East – 2,300 *matelots* in all.

When she was working the Carl Vinson before Christmas (stepping in between Defender's departure and Dauntless' arrival), Kent acted as 'plane guard' – a reference point for pilots returning from sorties.

With the Charles de Gaulle battle group, the British warship has returned to her roots, protecting the carrier and her escorts from submarines.

In addition she's also keeping her 'eyes' and 'ears' open for threats in the air and on the surface and using her Lynx helicopter and radar suite.

The 'threats' in White Shark – a three-day exercise with Saudi Naval and Air Forces – came in three dimensions: below, on and above the waves.

Red Sea skies were filled with the de Gaulle's Super Etendard strike aircraft and Rafale fighter-bombers, plus Saudi Typhoons and F15s, while anti-submarine, gunnery and refuelling exercises were thrown into the mix as the Saudi frigates Al Damman et Makkha and tanker Yunbu joined in.

Having honed her skills with the Vinson, Cdr Andrew Block said he and his 200 men and women felt properly at home as the frigate slipped seamlessly into the French task force.

"As the Royal Navy starts to get back into the fixed-wing carrier strike business, HMS Kent has demonstrated that we bring a sharp edge to task group operations as we integrated into our second carrier strike group in as many months," he added.

The link-up between the two navies is the latest in a series of exercises and joint deployments since the turn of the decade with the goal of creating an Anglo-French expeditionary force next year.

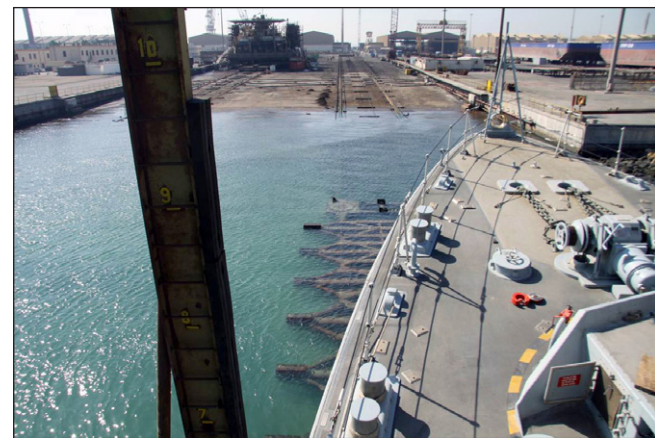
"The UK and France share common defence and security interests, not to mention the two most capable armed forces in Europe," Cdr Block adds.

"It is therefore a real honour for my ship's company to be part of the first joint naval task force operations in the Gulf."

His sentiments were echoed by *Contre-Amiral* (Rear Admiral) Eric Chaperon, in charge of the de Gaulle group.

"We work regularly with the Royal Navy, but the integration of HMS Kent instead of a French frigate in the battle group as part of an operational deployment of several months is a first.

"It reflects the level of co-operation between the two navies and the awareness of the need to join forces to jointly deal with the challenges we face at sea."



Penzance is in it for the long haul

BEING hauled very carefully up the slipway at the Arab Shipbuilding and Repair Yard in Bahrain, this is 600 tonnes of cutting-edge Royal Navy minehunter beginning an overhaul.

Taken out of the water following seven demanding months from the Firth of Clyde to the sandy waters of the Gulf was HMS Penzance.

She arrived in Bahrain at the end of July last year after a 7,900-mile journey from Faslane, home of the Sandown-class flotilla, to the home of the RN's four Gulf-based minehunters.

Since then she's been busy training on a grand and small scale, from the world's biggest mine warfare exercise in the autumn, to joint work-outs with Coalition and local navies operating in the Gulf and surveying routes around the region.

Penzance and her sisters were designed in the final years of the Cold War with the much cooler waters of the North Sea in mind, but over the past dozen years she and her sister ships in the Sandown class have spent much of their time east of Suez, from helping to clear the waters off Iraq in the 2003 war to maintaining a permanent minehunter presence in the region since late 2006.

Each ship spends three to three-and-a-half years in the Gulf, so to prepare her for the next stage, Penzance was hauled out of the water so work could be carried out on her specialist Voith-Schneider propellers as well as revamping the diesel generators.

"A standard deployment for a frigate or destroyer is nine months, so for these ships to stay here and remain so busy for three years is a big task for the engineers," said WO2 Del Murray, Penzance's marine engineer officer who was overseeing the overhaul.

"My team and I have relished the challenge, but our maintenance period has provided a chance to deal with some of the underlying issues that we could not solve when the ship was in the water."

Penzance's Commanding Officer Lt Cdr Jim Blythe said his crew were delighted with the work carried out at the Bahrain yard.

"In just a short period, the ship was given the care and attention she needed to remain at the forefront of the UK's mine clearance capability in the Gulf region," he added.



● The USS Carl Vinson takes on fuel from the USNS Walter S Diehl while HMS Dauntless stands guard

Pictures: LA(Phot) Simmo Simpson



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Sailors' blood helps in battle with Ebola

BLOOD from British sailors is being used for the first time to fight the deadly Ebola virus in Sierra Leone.

Two Royal Navy nurses – CPONN Mark 'Robbie' Robinson and PONN Mark Bailey – set up a volunteer emergency blood donor panel in preparation for apheresis at sea while their ship RFA Argus is off West Africa as part of the multi-national fight against the killer disease.

Both nurses performed the procedure in Afghanistan but this is the first time that blood products have ever been donated on an operational Royal Naval Service ship.

CPONN Robinson said: "Setting up the initial emergency donor panel, though challenging, has been a great experience."

"Personnel have been enthusiastic in coming forward to donate their platelets."

Apheresis is the process of removing whole blood from a donor, separating the blood into its individual components so that one of them – in this case the platelets – can be removed. The rest of the blood is then given back to the donor while the platelets are stored on the ship and some flown to the Kerry Town Treatment Unit near Freetown.

Platelets are essential for patients to be able to form blood clots and prevent uncontrolled bleeding in trauma cases.

Lessons learned from Afghanistan demonstrated platelet infusions, alongside infusions of red blood cells, played a critical role in the resuscitation of major haemorrhage leading to



● From left, CPONN Mark 'Robbie' Robinson, PONN Mark Bailey, Musn Christopher Brisley, Cpl Kelly Wooton RAF and WO1 Jim Robinson, in the PCRf aboard RFA Argus off Sierra Leone

improved survival rates.

Platelets only remain viable for a few days so it is logistically difficult to fly supplies from the UK. Ebola is a viral haemorrhagic fever and on Operation Gritrock platelet infusions are also being used in an attempt to reduce bleeding sometimes seen in Ebola patients.

RFA Argus left Falmouth in October, carrying 820 NAS, Royal Marines from 539 Assault Squadron and 42 Cdo, together with medical staff manning the Primary Casualty Receiving Facility.

The PCRf has up to 100 hospital beds but for Gritrock offers a 15-bed facility to care for casualties with either non-Ebola-related illness or injuries among the UK military personnel and other entitled personnel.

Stringent quality-control measures are adhered to before any blood product is considered safe. Once deemed safe to use by the PCRf's biomedical scientists

WO1(MT) Jim Robinson and Cpl Kelly Wooton, the platelets are added to the PCRf's blood bank.

Musn Christopher Brisley was the first aboard to donate and now two apheresis sessions are held every week.

■ Three Naval air crewmen have been presented with the Brigadier's Commendation for raising money for an education charity in Sierra Leone.

The men, who are all with 820 NAS embarked in Argus, raised more than £9,000 from colleagues onboard and families back home.

They have given the money to EducAid – a UK-based charity which promotes the education of young people affected by war and Ebola in Sierra Leone.

LA(SE) Dave Jackson, 29, POA Diccon Griffith, 36, and POAEM Stephen Thornhill, 42, have all been recognised for their work.



We will always remember them

AT THE foot of First Mountain on remote Pebble Island – where penguins and sheep far outnumber human beings – sailors from HMS Dragon salute those who went before them.

This is the memorial to HMS Coventry, lost off the Falklands 33 years ago as she did what Dragon is designed to do today: shielding the Fleet from air attack.

The memorial to the 19 men killed when the ship sank was one of two cleaned up by Dragon's crew as they paid their respects to the destroyer men of 1982.

Also visited – and in an equally isolated spot – was the cross erected to Coventry's sister ship HMS Sheffield, fatally hit by an Exocet missile on May 4 1982 some 100 miles off Sealion Island.

'Shiny Sheff' was the first Royal Navy warship lost in action since 1945. Though the warhead of the Argentine missile did not explode, the fires its impact caused killed 19 men.

Despite efforts to save the Type 42 destroyer, she subsequently sank under tow to South Georgia. As Sealion Island was the closest landfall, a monument was erected there – accessible only by Dragon's Lynx helicopter.

Lt Cdr Joe Allfree, Dragon's Executive Officer, said the Sheffield memorial was "a very humbling sight."

He continued: "It was a pleasure to spend some time on Sealion island, meet the residents and carry out some husbandry to keep the HMS Sheffield memorial shipshape and Bristol fashion."

The time on Sealion also allowed the party to carry out a bit of penguin spotting by getting up close with a Rockhopper colony.

"Impressively at home on the sheer rock face the



● The CO of HMS Dragon Capt Rex Cox and LStd 'Sticky' Greene clean the HMS Coventry memorial

penguins did not seem that bothered by us and we were able to get really close to them," said PO Fran Boreham. Pebble Island is 140 miles' sail away through Falkland Sound and off the north shore of West Falkland.

Here on May 25 1982 HMS Coventry and frigate HMS Broadsword lay in wait to take out incoming enemy jets before they could attack the bulk of the Royal Navy's invasion force mustered around San Carlos Water.

After downing two Skyhawks with Coventry's Sea Dart missiles, the two ships came under sustained attack from low-level Argentine bombers.

The destroyer was struck by two 1,000-pound bombs. Both detonated, wrecking the operations and engine rooms. Within 20 minutes, Coventry capsized and sank, losing 20 of her ship's company.

This time, the wreathlaying party was led by Dragon's Commanding Officer Capt Rex Cox – who previously was in charge of Coventry's sisters HMS Manchester and York.

"It was extremely poignant to be able to pay my respects to our fellow destroyermen who made the ultimate sacrifice so that others could

remain free," he said.

HMS Dragon also called at Tristan da Cunha – one of the most remote islands on the planet. There is no land to the west for more than 2,000 miles, South Africa is 1,750 miles to the east and the nearest inhabited locality is another British Overseas Territory, a mere 1,510 miles away.

With no airfield, the volcanic isle, home to 257 British citizens – almost all of them living in the 'capital', Edinburgh of the Seven Sea – can only be reached by sea.

The island's harbour cannot accommodate a 8,500-tonne warship, so the Type 45 destroyer used her sea boats and Lynx helicopter to ferry personnel and supplies from ship to shore.

Tristan relies on crayfish as its main source of revenue. To vary the diet a little, Dragon landed stores of pork, sweets and traditional British sauces such as HP.

"Tristan is truly breathtaking and it was fantastic to get ashore and meet the people, who were friendly, kind and really pleased we had taken the time to visit and help them," said Lt Stuart Greig, the destroyer's deputy logistics officer.

● The HMS Sheffield memorial



Diamond shines in virtual world

AN AVATAR took the place of a Royal Navy warship in a transatlantic exercise as the real thing remained in her home port.

Instead of Academy Award-winner James Cameron directing proceedings, the exercise saw HMS Diamond's crew work with two US carrier strike groups and the German Navy courtesy of a simulator at HMS Collingwood.

The Portsmouth-based Type 45 joined the USS Theodore Roosevelt and USS George HW Bush carrier strike groups and three German warships to foil a potential enemy in Treasure Coast, Florida.

Operation Bold Step, which included 23 maritime units, two carrier air wings, the US Marine Corps and US Army as well as a German battlestaff group, took place over seven sites in three countries.

The latest exercise followed



● HMS Diamond's avatar

Operation Brimstone which saw HMS Diamond's crew work in the Maritime Composite Training System at Collingwood while HMS Sutherland's ship's company took part from HNMB Devonport – the first ship to use the West Country simulator for an international exercise.

Lt Cdr Alex Meyer, in charge of Diamond for the exercise, said: "Operation Brimstone was

an excellent opportunity for Diamond to participate in some of the world's most advanced warfare training."

Virtual training is becoming more widely used by the Royal Navy and will provide realistic training for both the Queen Elizabeth-class carriers and the Type 26 Global Combat Ship before either vessel is actually in service.

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Pictures: PO(Phot) Si Ethell

Finding life on the Moon

ADMITTEDLY, this is Half Moon. And it's only inhabited for six months of the year...

Life on Half Moon – 62°35'34.42"S, 59°55'13.67"W, or just off the north shore of the Burgas Peninsula on Livingston Island in the South Shetlands – is provided by the scientists of Cámara Base, one of 13 centres of research visited by the Royal Navy's Antarctic patrol ship HMS Protector as she helps to guarantee the unspoiled sanctity of these white wastelands.

Rather than her more regular duties of charting the waters

around the frozen continent with her impressive sonar and surveying suite, or providing logistic support to the British Antarctic Survey, the ship has been moving international inspectors around mostly inaccessible sites.

Legal, environmental and scientific experts from Britain and the Czech Republic joined the Devonport-based ship to ensure the terms of the Antarctic Treaty and its protocol on Environmental Protection are being upheld by research stations, cruise ships and yachts.

The treaty is committed to preserving the Antarctic for

peace and science and – as an original signatory – the UK continues to support it as the best way to preserve the fragile region.

In the space of just three weeks, 13 scientific bases belonging to eight different nations, four yachts and seven cruise ships were inspected.

Among the latter, the 6,750-tonne MS Bremen, which carries up to 155 passengers who've paid at least £6,500 for the privilege of visiting Antarctica on three-week-long cruises.

Protector's team called on



her in Paradise Bay (pictured below), off the west coast of the Antarctic Peninsula – one of only two harbours used by cruise ships in Antarctica.

One hundred and eighty miles away on Half Moon, scientists occupy Cámara research station during the austral summer, using it to gather meteorological data – it's actually quite mild by Antarctic standards here (typically 2°C to -7°C).

Protector's ship's company not only provided support to the team carrying out the inspections, but

also took part in them.

Her engineers used their experience and training in evaluating systems such as water production, waste management, fire and safety procedures in the bases, while her medical officer Surg Lt Cdr Scutt inspected the medical and emergency facilities, health and hygiene.

"The support of HMS Protector and the skills of the ship's company has been fundamental to the success of our programme," said Henry Burgess of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's polar region department.

"Leading this inspection

visibly demonstrates the UK's contribution and commitment to ensuring a peaceful future of this vast but vulnerable continent."

Another of Protector's roles in the Antarctic Treaty zone is to clear any waste they come across.

Early one evening a sharp-eyed sailor spotted what appeared to be a dinghy floating upside-down on the surface.

After confirming that there was no-one in the area in need of assistance the ship retrieved the boat from the water.

It later emerged that the dinghy had come free from a yacht and Protector was able to return it to its Polish owners a few days later.



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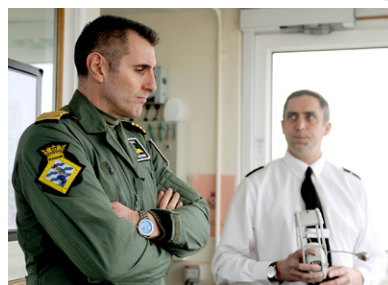
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HIGHWAY TO THE DANGER ZONE

pictures: po(phot) paul a'barrow, rnas culdrose and mcm2 alex king, uss carl vinson



NO your eyes do not deceive you.

This is a Sea Harrier of 899 Naval Air Squadron leaving a Sea King behind in a blur on the standings at Culdrose.

And just out of shot, the jump jet grinds to a halt with a high-pitched whine as its Pegasus turbofan winds down.

The new commanding officer of the Cornish air station dropped in on the 'party piece' of the RN School of Flight Deck Operations, the dummy deck, where the past is helping to forge the future.

As part of his 'tour of empire' Capt Ade Orchard – one of the nation's most accomplished Harrier pilots (3,000 hours in the jump jet's cockpit) – watched aircraft handlers under instruction.

Although the Harrier was axed at the end of 2010 following the last defence review and its successor, the F-35 Lightning II, won't fly from the deck of HMS Queen Elizabeth until 2018, the school is maintaining the skills needed to safely marshal multi-million-pound strike fighters around a flight deck, launch them, and recover them.

The Queen Elizabeth – due to begin sea trials next year – and her sister HMS Prince of Wales are expected to launch and land between 72 and 108 sorties a day on front-line operations.

Each of the carriers will need a 70-strong flight deck team directing operations – four officers, six senior and 60 junior rates. As well as 108 sailors going through flight deck school each year at various stages of their handler careers, RN teams have been working on the US Navy's carriers – most recently aboard USS Carl Vinson deployed in the Middle East – to learn the art of working on a 'big deck' (the Royal Navy hasn't had them since the demise of HMS Ark Royal IV in the late 70s).

"I won't forget watching night flight ops for the first time," said CPO Callum Gardner, who was marshalling Hornet and Super Hornet jets (pictured far left), stubby 'COD' twin-props delivering passengers and supplies, Hawkeye and Growler intelligence-gathering planes, plus helicopters – more than 70 aircraft in all. "Even after ten years of service, I've never seen something so breathtaking."

"We've never had a ship as big as the Queen Elizabeth so when we go back, we can pass along the information to our flight decks."

The six Brits on the Vinson – all senior rates – qualified as aircraft directors or aircraft callers and the hands-on nature of working on a bustling flight deck on live operations has been both unforgettable and invaluable.

"You feel it in your chest – you don't feel this anywhere else."

The mock-up of an Invincible-class carrier flight deck at Culdrose doesn't offer quite the same thrills – the limiter on the engine keeps the 14 single and twin-seat Harrier rooted to the Cornish tarmac.

The F-35B is longer, wider (10ft greater wingspan) and twice as heavy as the Harrier, but shepherding and directing working jets does give you all the indispensable parts of the carrier experience. (Just for good measure there are two each of Sea Kings, Lynx and

Merlin to shuffle around – although these don't have working engines.)

The dummy deck – 50°5'14"N, 5°14'57"W on Google Earth – has existed in various formats since the late 1950s when Culdrose became the home of handler training. It was last reconfigured, to meet the requirements of the Harrier carriers, in the late 80s.

And it will require rebuilding again for the Queen Elizabeths, whose flight decks are more than twice the size of their forerunners (our graphics artist Andy Brady has superimposed the QE over the existing deck, left).

The school doesn't need the entire flight deck, but it does need a section recreating – a 140-metre-long section from the aft island to the stern (including one of the ship's two lifts), and 70 metres across; it's the width, more than the length, of the new carriers which is likely to catch people out.

"I probably bore everyone stupid when I bang on about the dummy deck and preparing for the way for the F-35s," says Lt Cdr Dave Dougan, formerly flight deck officer on HMS Illustrious and now in charge of the flight deck school.

"But it's quite a transition – new aircraft, new carriers."

The school uses simulators for some of its instruction to teams on small ships, but for the carrier experience you need a heavy dose of reality.

"You still need a jet trundling along for that realistic feeling that you are on a flight deck," says Lt Cdr Dougan. "Every naval airman comes through here for the experience of moving working jets around, the noise, the weather, the reduced communications."

The initiative with the US Navy and Marine Corps – part of the broader 'Long Lead Skills Programme which also includes FAA pilots flying American jets – gives exactly that experience, but it's coming to an end.

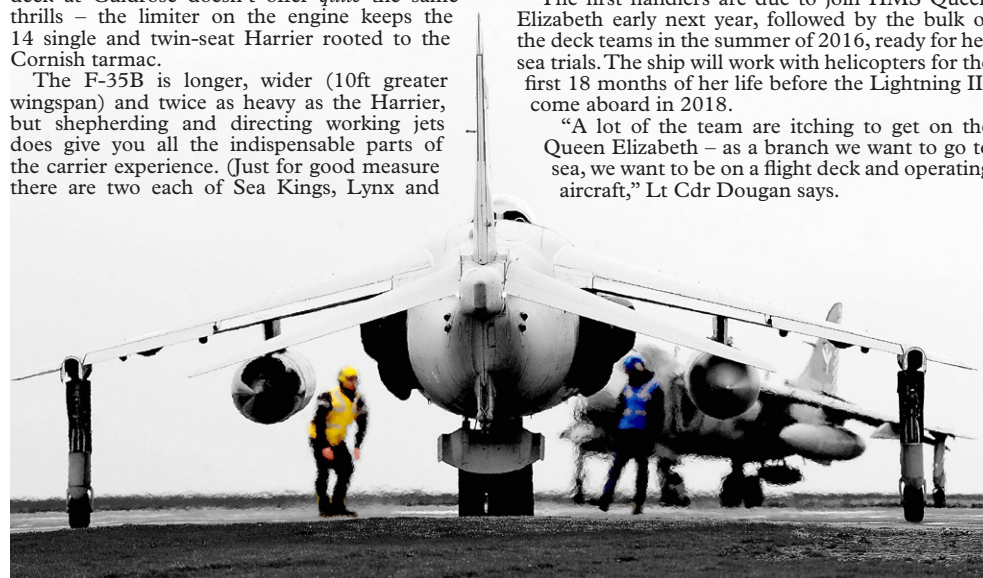
And as accommodating as the Americans have been, their procedures are very different from ours, they can only host small teams – roughly half a dozen – at a time and the initiative is coming to its end.

"We've pushed in every direction to make sure we're ready. A flight deck is a dangerous place. Our job is to make sure it is safe for everyone and everything using it," Lt Cdr Dougan adds.

"It's important that this doesn't become a lost art. Everyone from the First Sea Lord down understands why we have this dummy deck and how important what we are doing for the new carriers is."

The first handlers are due to join HMS Queen Elizabeth early next year, followed by the bulk of the deck teams in the summer of 2016, ready for her sea trials. The ship will work with helicopters for the first 18 months of her life before the Lightning IIs come aboard in 2018.

"A lot of the team are itching to get on the Queen Elizabeth – as a branch we want to go to sea, we want to be on a flight deck and operating aircraft," Lt Cdr Dougan says.



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Baby Arthur's spicy Wings

BABY Arthur Lofthouse has a permanent reminder of a whirlwind 24 hours for his parents.

For Arthur has been blessed with the middle name Andrew following some fatherly advice from the Duke of York at RNAS Yeovilton's final Lynx and Sea King parade (see right).

Mum Judy was a week overdue when she attended the ceremony to see her husband Lt Tom receive his Wings.

"I was keeping everything crossed and astonishingly not only did we get to attend but our son was born later that night following advice from the Duke of York to have a curry – which we did," said Judy, 29.

Lt Tom, 30, added: "The curry seemed to do the trick so we couldn't resist adding Andrew as a middle name, Arthur Thomas Andrew Lofthouse."

"To finally get my Wings was a tremendous feeling. The arrival of our son on the same day as being awarded my Wings made for an absolutely perfect day."

Baby Arthur was born at Yeovil District Hospital weighing 8lb 5oz.

It's the Wild Black Cats

OR IS it the Black Wildcats? Anyway, when the 2015 season begins for the RN's helicopter display team, the Black Cats, it'll be two Wildcats pirouetting, nodding, spinning and performing in UK skies for the first time.

After a successful 2014 season using a Lynx and a new Wildcat – the Lynx's successor – for this year's displays the Cats will be solely using the new helicopter.

Full details about the team's programme for 2015 will be available at their official website – www.royalnavy.mod.uk/news-and-latest-activity/public-relations/display-teams/black-cats – once the display the fliers are working on to wow the crowds has been approved.



Pictures: LA(Phot) Iggy Roberts, RNAS Yeovilton

The final chapter begins

THE closing chapter in the legendary lives of two Fleet Air Arm helicopters is into its final pages with the final Lynx and Jungle Sea King crews receiving their Wings.

After training pilots, observers and aircrews for the two helicopters since the late 1960s (Sea King) and late '70s (Lynx) the last batch of students completed their year-long education and received their Wings, the badge of a qualified aviator.

Pinning the badges on the sleeves of the six fliers – two Lynx and two Jungle Sea King pilots, plus two observers – was the Duke of York, Commodore in Chief of the Fleet Air Arm and a former pilot of both helicopters.

Lts Tom Lofthouse and Lt Matt Clark were the last of a long line of Jungle Sea King pilots to pass out and join 845 Naval Air Squadron. They'll have 14 months' front-line experience on the venerable green helicopter before it retires in March 2016 after 47 years' service in favour of battlefield Merlins.

"This is a huge honour – the Sea King has been part of the Navy for so long. It's an iconic aircraft and although there are more modern helicopters in service, this was my first choice because of what the squadron does and the nature of its flying day-to-day," said 27-year-old Lt Clark from Salisbury.

"You know the Sea King is robust. It will look after you if anything goes wrong. It's seen so much action and active service."

And ready for global duties in Lynx Mk8 with 815 NAS are observers Sub Lt Christian Smith, Lt Max Cosby and pilots Lts Rhydian Edwards and Danielle Welch. Their aircraft has a little longer to run before it's phased out, flying until 2017 while its successor Wildcat is

introduced by 825 NAS.

Congratulating the Lynx fliers on their achievement – aside from families and a good smattering of the Fleet Air Arm community gathered in one of 815 NAS' hangars at RNAS Yeovilton – was the Class of '78, veterans of the first Fleet Air Arm aviators to qualify on the original version of the Lynx.

Two former pilots (Cdr Godfrey Kent and Lt Paul Bennett) and two observers (Lt Cdr Derek Dann and Cdre Martin Manning) reunited to toast the helicopter with a glass of champers and reminisce about good times.

For them, the fast, nimble and powerful helicopter was a revelation – taking over from the tiny Wasp.

Back then the Lynx didn't have "so many lumps and bumps" on it – as retired observer Lt Cdr Derek 'Desperate' Dann calls the hi-tech sensors and kit which has been added to the helicopter through its lengthy career.

"Lynx was a big step-up from the Wasp," said ex-pilot Cdr Godfrey Kent. "It was much more powerful, agile. It was the aircraft to be in its day."

The Wasp, though fondly remembered, wasn't particularly potent – with two Mk44 torpedoes attached, it had an endurance of little more than a dozen minutes. By the standards of the day, the Lynx took power all the way up to 11 – as Cdr Kent found attending an event a Epsom racecourse.

"We put the aircraft down in the enclosure... and promptly blew down the white railings," he added.

On a more serious note, for the first time the Lynx forged a strong cockpit team – the pilot and observer side by side; the pilot in the right-hand seat to fly the aircraft, the observer on his/her left doing the fighting.

"That was the biggest difference from previous helicopters – the observer and the pilot next to each other, forming one team," said Lt Cdr



I see no Merlins...

OR STORMS for that matter... which is a bit of a turn-up for an exercise named Merlin Storm 2. There was, however, plenty of rain for Royal Marines and personnel from Commando Helicopter Force on Salisbury Plain and some Sea King Mk4s.

Part one of the exercise, which you read about in last month's *Navy News*, featured Merlin Mk3s from Operational Conversion Flight of RAF 28 Squadron, while part two of the exercise saw veteran Sea Kings from 845 NAS deploy to Rolleston Camp.

As well as helping 45 Commando prepare to take over as the Lead Commando Group, the exercise provided training for air and ground crews from 845 and the Commando Mobile Air Operations Team.

845 provided aviation support for a number of scenarios, including landings in Imber, the village vacated 70 years ago in preparation for D-Day, and urban combat training, known by

commandos as FISHing (Fighting In Someone's House).

The green berets also carried out extraction missions, while aircrew completed their qualification, competencies and currencies – formation flying, under-slung loads, winching and trooping drills.

845's Lt Steve Pearce said: "We are still the most specialised amphibious helicopter support unit in the world, however during the last ten years in Afghanistan we have been focused on flying in the land environment, we are now concentrating on the littoral role."

"Hopefully we'll be able to get more involved with the regular amphibious exercises like Joint Warrior and the Cougar deployment."

The exercise was halted for a day while the Sea Kings – entering their final year of service – returned to RNAS Yeovilton to take part in the final Lynx and Sea Kings Wings Parade (see main story).

Dann.

For the sole remaining Lynx squadron (the training and front-line units merged last year into 815 NAS), the end of 37 years of training was "a special and poignant day" in the words of its commanding officer Cdr Al Haigh.

He continued: "These aircraft have legendary status and are loved by those who fly in them. But even two successful aircraft must retire one day and we are approaching the end of an era." During the ceremony, which

saw music provided by the Band of HM Royal Marines and a 48-strong Royal Guard, the Duke paid tribute to the dedication of the trainees.

"I don't think you really realise how much hard work and time those who receive their Wings have actually put in," he told family, friends and a good smattering of Naval aviators past and present gathered in the 815 NAS.

"This is a very, very important ceremony in the life of the Royal Navy and Fleet Air Arm and has bought back memories to me

of when I stood where these six young people are – a very long time ago!"

He told the six successful students they would go on to do a job of incalculable value to the nation.

"The work the Royal Navy does is vital to the interests of the UK and the work that these young people do make a huge difference to all of us."

In addition to gaining her pilot's Wings, 30-year-old Lt Welch received the AgustaWestland trophy for the best all-round results and the Audi TT award for the student displaying the most effort during the course.



● The Class of 2015 – Lts Danielle Welch and Rhydian Edwards, Sub Lt Christian Smith and Lt Max Cosby – with the Class of 1978 – Paul Bennett, Martin Manning, Godfrey Kent and Derek Dann – in front of a museum piece Lynx

CELEBRATING 150 YEARS

This year marks the 150th anniversary of The Royal Alfred Seafarers' Society, a maritime charity based in Banstead, Surrey.

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Fully charged for busy year

PORT visits around the UK as well as trips to France, Germany, Norway and Sweden are on the packed itinerary for one of the Royal Navy's patrol boats.

HMS Charger, which has just come out of her annual maintenance, is the Universities Royal Naval Unit (URNU) vessel for Liverpool Universities and is based at Brunswick Dock.

Last month saw the P2000 host a sea-training weekend for students, during which Charger sailed up the Manchester Ship Canal to Salford.

As well as students, the ship's new Commanding Officer Lt James Wallington-Smith welcomed aboard members of his family, including his ex-Royal Navy father.

HMS Charger also escorted Type 23 HMS Lancaster into Liverpool for a routine visit.

The ship's hectic programme includes visits to Bangor in Northern Ireland, Troon and Faslane in Scotland, Swansea and Cardiff in Wales and Padstow, Falmouth and Devonport in England.

The patrol vessel has visits to France, Belgium, Netherlands, Denmark, Norway and Sweden planned but the highlight will be supporting Kiel Week – one of the world's largest annual sailing regattas – at the end of June.

URNU students, who learn practical navigation and seamanship training, boost the ship's permanent complement of five.

Each student will normally attend three training weekends and one two-week deployment over the spring and summer holidays.

HMS Charger's first URNU training weekend of 2015 – and Lt Wallington-Smith's first in command – saw ten URNU students conduct navigation training on the River Mersey.

"With tides of over five knots it was quite challenging for the less-experienced and we had two Liverpool students who were at sea for the first time," said Lt Wallington-Smith.

HMS Charger also supported Bristol URNU by offering two places to their students while their ship HMS Dasher was completing her maintenance period.



Two of the Bristol students – Coral and Zoe – wrote the following thank-you to HMS Charger.

"We would like to thank you for having us on board HMS Charger for a sea weekend, this past weekend."

"We very much enjoyed the opportunity to practise some pilotage. It was interesting to see how another unit runs their sea weekends, especially on the logistical front – there are definitely a few things we will take back to our own unit."

"Liverpool URNU seem to be a very friendly and encouraging bunch and we were made to feel very welcome."

In December last year HMS Charger went in to Holyhead Boatyard in Anglesey for her annual survey and repair period. This allowed engineers to get some external support for their bigger engineering maintenance tasks.

During the four weeks in the

year, the ship had a complete overhaul of both main engines and both generators. She also had a replacement anchor windlass and a fresh coat of paint.

After initial service with the Severn Division RNR at Bristol, HMS Charger was transferred in October 1990 to the Liverpool URNU, which was formed in October 1971 and is now located within Royal Naval Headquarters (RNHQ) Merseyside. Here the students receive instruction on seamanship, navigation management and leadership.

The unit meets formally every week and 'drill nights' involve theoretical instruction and practical chart work. Sport and practical teamwork include football, bowling, skiing and many other sporting and adventurous training activities.

Recruitment to the unit takes

place annually in early October from Liverpool and Lancaster universities. Further information is available from Liverpool University Royal Naval Unit, RN Headquarters Merseyside, East Brunswick Dock, Sefton Street, Liverpool, L3 4DZ.

HMS Charger can trace her name back to 1801, when the first Royal Navy ship to bear the name entered Service. The gun brig was sold in 1814 and the next ship to bear the name was an Albacore-class wood screw gunboat, which served from 1887 to 1921.

HMS Charger also has one of the shortest RN careers. An escort carrier, intended for the Royal Navy, the former Rio de la Plata was commissioned on October 2 1941 as HMS Charger (D27), however, the transfer was rescinded and the ship returned to US control on October 4 1941.



Class: Archer-class patrol vessel
 Builder: Watercraft Ltd, Shoreham-by-Sea; Vosper Thornycroft (for fitting out)
 Launched: 1986
 Commissioned: 1988
 Homeport: Liverpool
 Identification: Pennant number P292
 Displacement: 54 tonnes
 Length: 20.8m (68ft)
 Beam: 5.8m (19ft)
 Draught: 1.8m (5ft 10in)
 Speed: 14kts
 Complement: 5 permanent; 18 in training, 12 when operational
 Propulsion: 2 shafts, Rolls Royce M800T diesels, 1,590 bhp
 Range: 550 nautical miles
 Sensors: Decca 1216 navigation radar
 Armament: 1 x Oerlikon 20mm cannon on fo'c'sle (can carry but not fitted)
 3 x general purpose machine guns

Facts and figures



● HMS Charger during her survey in Holyhead



PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORIES

A GENERATION before the pocket battleship Graf Spee spectacularly self-destructed off Montevideo, there was a similar final act of the squadron commanded by the admiral of the same name – but not played out before the South American media.

From the archives of the Imperial War Museum, this is the partially-submerged hull of SMS Dresden, one funnel still belching smoke as she goes down in Cumberland Bay on the island Más a Tierra off Chile.

Hitherto, the cruiser had been the sole survivor of the German East Asia Squadron which, for the first six or so months of the Great War, had led the Royal Navy a merry dance around the Pacific and South Atlantic.

The majority of the squadron,

including its commander, had been wiped out off the Falklands in December 1914 – and thus did the Royal Navy avenge defeat at Coronel off the Chilean coast one month earlier.

Victory at the Falklands was not complete, however. The light cruiser Dresden, with her steam turbines thundering away at 24kts, managed to evade the pursuing British battle-cruisers, making for the sheltered waters of the Magellan Strait south of Punta Arenas.

After taking on coal from a German steamer, Dresden's captain Fritz Lüdecke contemplated trying to run the gauntlet of RN patrols in the Atlantic to reach safe haven in the Reich – but decided the threat and the state of the cruiser's engines after her

exertions since the preceding August, ruled it out.

Instead, he intended to work his way across the Pacific with the aim of disrupting British shipping in the Indian Ocean, as her sister Emden had done in the autumn of 1914.

By mid-February 1915, Lüdecke determined the time was ripe to island-hop across the southern Pacific and got as far as the waters of Más a Tierra – today Robinson Crusoe Island – 400 miles off the Chilean coast, where he captured a British-registered barque.

But a few days later, Dresden ran into the cruiser HMS Kent. Rather than face battle, Lüdecke scurried for Cumberland Bay.

The dash finally did for Dresden's engines – not to mention her coal stocks – and

her captain resolved to have her interned by the Chileans.

Except that the Royal Navy wasn't going to wait that long. On the morning of March 14, HMS Glasgow (which had been at both Coronel and the Falklands) opened fire on the German cruiser, stationary in Cumberland Bay on the north side of the island.

To Glasgow's guns were soon added those of the Kent – both riding roughshod over Chilean neutrality.

After a handful of shots in reply, the Germans raised the white flag and sent a negotiator across – one Lt Wilhelm Canaris, future head of German counter-intelligence under Hitler – to the British, while Lüdecke's crew prepared to scuttle their ship.

Canaris protested at the Royal Navy's flagrant breach

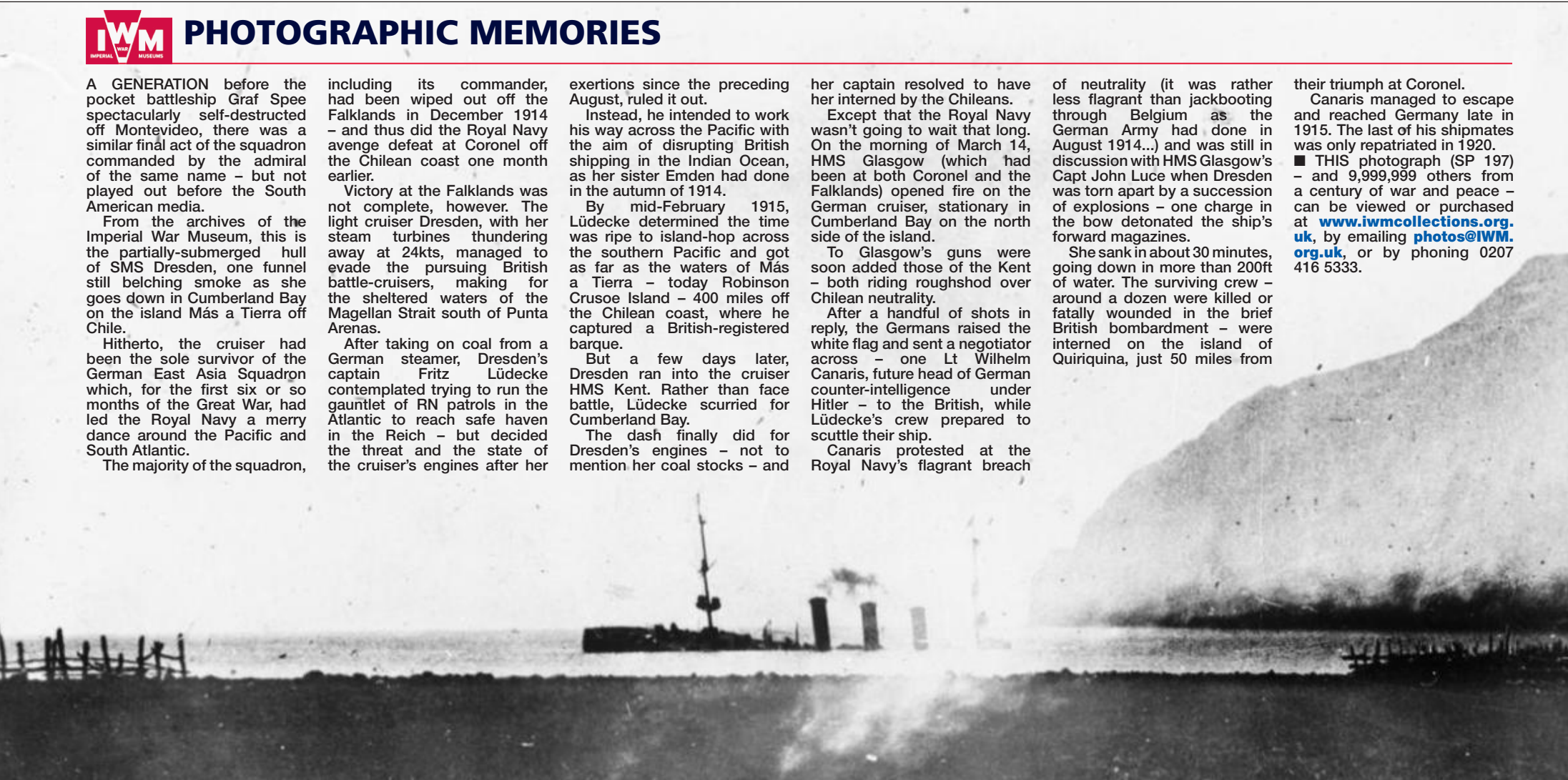
of neutrality (it was rather less flagrant than jackbooting through Belgium as the German Army had done in August 1914...) and was still in discussion with HMS Glasgow's Capt John Luce when Dresden was torn apart by a succession of explosions – one charge in the bow detonated the ship's forward magazines.

She sank in about 30 minutes, going down in more than 200ft of water. The surviving crew – around a dozen were killed or fatally wounded in the brief British bombardment – were interned on the island of Quiriquina, just 50 miles from

their triumph at Coronel.

Canaris managed to escape and reached Germany late in 1915. The last of his shipmates was only repatriated in 1920.

■ THIS photograph (SP 197) – and 9,999,999 others from a century of war and peace – can be viewed or purchased at www.iwmcollections.org.uk, by emailing photos@iwm.org.uk, or by phoning 0207 416 5333.



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I FINISHED packing the morning of my flight, having checked my kit list again to be certain I'd got everything, writes *Lt Andrew Christie*.

I returned from a patrol with HMS Tyne just before Christmas, and was now, in mid-January, ready to travel to the Falkland Islands to join HMS Dragon for three weeks.

As a Naval Education and Training Service (NETS) Officer, my job is to support Command in developing the most important asset onboard any warship or submarine – the people.

As part of the Flag Officer Sea Training (FOST) organisation, NETS promotes and develops the intellectual potential of the RN's people to help maximise operational capability, helping sailors develop the mental agility needed to solve complex problems in a high-pressure environment whilst ultimately preparing them for return to civilian life.

NETS is made up of Learning and Development Centres across the UK and Gibraltar, where shoreside personnel can access Education, Lifelong Learning and Resettlement (EL3R) advice, undertake academic courses for promotion, and receive guidance on resettlement, as well as a team of six deployable NETS Operations (NETS Ops) Officers.

As a NETS Ops Officer, I spend up to 60 per cent of my time visiting units across the Fleet to provide support at the point of need.

Whilst every ship and submarine in the Fleet has a nominated Education and Resettlement Officer (ERO) onboard, they are not subject matter experts and NETS exists to support them.

But education is only a small part of the job.

As Training Management Officers and experts in learning, the NETS Ops team also act as Command training advisers, helping the CO to ensure that all training is as effective and worthwhile as it can be.

So, whilst we're not your typical FOSTies, we have an important function in ensuring that the ship's company are always learning and striving to improve.

Life as part of NETS is never dull – when you're in the office it's never very long before you're heading back out to sea.

All sailors and marines assigned to a seagoing draft have a right to a NETS visit at least every 18 months, so the six of us are always on the move.

When we're in the UK, we're always busy running courses, providing coaching workshops to units across the country and, of course, preparing for our next deployment.

Cast your NETS wide



● *Std Rawace (right) discusses with NETS Officer Lt Andrew Christie how he has used coaching to help LStd Greene (left) in his goal to learn Fijian*

The past month has been no exception.

Immediately after returning from Christmas leave following a busy autumn programme, the NETS Ops team gathered for the first time in six months.

As the team is spread across Portsmouth, Devonport and Faslane to provide the best possible support to each of the Flotillas, it doesn't meet very often.

Officer Commanding NETS Ops, Lt Cdr Dan Bleasdale, said: "These development weeks are vitally important for the team – just getting together and reviewing the previous six months is great for development, but we also arrange briefs and workshops focused on current issues within the Service."

"In January we had people come from Project Faraday, Troops to Teachers, and NCHQ Staff discussing how we can assist with the Manpower Recovery Programme."

"All this together means we are continuously enhancing our capability and learning as an organisation, so in turn we are able to provide the best possible service to personnel during embarkations and visits alongside."

After a busy programme of training, including delivering a course to a new batch of ships' EROs, helping them learn about the RN's EL3R organisation and the various opportunities available to sailors and marines,

and having made some last-minute arrangements with Dragon's Officer of the Watch 1 (OOW1) Lt Lloyd Wilson – who is also the ship's ERO – I was ready for my marathon flight to the Falklands. At over 18 hours, it is not for the faint-hearted.

Arriving onboard Dragon, it soon became clear what a busy three weeks was in store.

The ship has a vibrant training culture onboard, and the ship's company were eager to get as much out of the visit as possible with a programme packed full of briefings, interviews, workshops, meetings, revision classes and exams.

All this whilst the ship's company were busy with their day jobs, be that conducting maritime security operations, visiting the remotest UK dependency (Tristan da Cunha), RASing with RFA Gold Rover or the first enhanced Royal Marines detachment at sea settling in before Dragon heads to West Africa. No mean feat.

Starting gradually, introducing myself to Dragon's ship's company and promoting awareness of the EL3R options out there, the programme soon picked up.

There is a real appetite for learning onboard – I've spoken to sailors taking GCSEs, interested in pursuing alternative careers in

the RN, looking to start a degree, wanting to use their Learning Credits, eager to become CW candidates and much more besides.

One of the best things about being a NETS Officer is the opportunity to talk to people in a one-to-one Personal Development Interview and discuss things that are important to them.

Alongside these interviews, the primary emphasis onboard Dragon was to aid the ship's company in gaining the educational qualifications required for promotion.

As many will be aware, promotion to LH requires English and Maths qualifications at Level 1, whilst promotion to PO (and to WO) requires Level 2 qualifications.

With daily revision classes, past papers and workbooks available to all personnel onboard, supported by informal, coaching-based, instruction, the students were kept busy but had excellent preparation for their assessments.

"I never thought that I'd sit English and Maths exams in the middle of the Atlantic, and taking the tests in the Junior Rates Dining Hall just made it feel more bizarre, but if the results go

my way, not only will I be qualified for promotion, but I'll have G C S E – equivalent civilian qualifications," said AB(WS) Jacob Welsh.

With four exams to sit over the course of my visit, time was tight, but all the students pushed themselves hard and finished the final test, Level 2 Maths, to great relief.

Of course, there is also a 'T' in NETS, and the visit to Dragon has seen a good deal of activity associated with supporting the ship's own training.

NETS Officers are experts in learning and development and look to help maximise the learning value of all training.

As Dragon steamed across the South Atlantic, a series of coaching workshops were held for the ship's company, introducing some (and reintroducing others)



● *Sailors sit a Functional Skills Level 2 maths exam in the Junior Rates' Dining Hall of HMS Dragon – in mid-Atlantic*

to some fundamental tools that really enhance the quality of training onboard.

Coaching isn't about being pink and fluffy, and it shouldn't be confined to Phase 1 and Phase 2 training.

Coaching is about good leadership, it is a natural part of CLM, and supports the wider effort to establish a learning culture across Defence.

Lt Wilson said: "Ensuring that we use coaching in the workplace is all about maximising the efficiency and effectiveness of everyone onboard, actively promoting opportunities for people to set goals that stretch them beyond their comfort zone, and encouraging feedback to be delivered in the most appropriate way possible so that, as a ship, Dragon is always learning."

Obviously, embedding with the ship's company means getting stuck in, and this visit was no different – whether it's putting on your No 2s for Burns Night or cleaning up for Captain's Rounds, when a NETS Officer is embarked we are very much part of the ship.

As part of NETS, I get the opportunity to travel throughout the Fleet, from a Type 45 on APT(S) to a minehunter stationed in Bahrain doing my day job, so the prospect of being able to (literally) roll sleeves up and help the ship's company in another way is an exciting one.

With Dragon soon arriving in Simons Town, I'll be leaving the ship and returning to the UK.

Three weeks isn't a long time

at sea, but a great deal has been achieved.

With the embarkation featuring support to both education and training, it really has generated a buzz onboard and made a substantive contribution to the ship, which she can take forward into the next phase of the deployment.

I also really enjoyed myself.

Dragon's CO, Capt Rex Cox, said: "NETS Officers play an important role in ensuring that the RN's people are enabled to reach their potential."

"My ship's company have been eager to take advantage of the services on offer and have benefitted enormously from Lt Christie's visit."

"Education, coaching and mentoring are clear force enablers and a vital component of operational success."

As is often the case in this job, I don't have long before my next deployment – I will only have a few days at home before travelling to join HMS Severn.

"Whilst it may be in a completely different hemisphere and a completely different ship, the principle remains the same – to support FOST and ships' COs, to develop their people, stimulate learning onboard, and enhance operational capability."

NETS visits are mandated in Second Sea Lord's Personnel Functional Standards.

To book a visit to your unit contact NAVYTRGHQ-NETSOPSHELPDESK@mod.uk

Naval Education and Training Service
NETS

● *HMS Dragon sails past Edinburgh of the Seven Seas, the main settlement on the South Atlantic island of Tristan da Cunha*



Divers rise to challenge to rescue submariners

History lesson for new Perishers

A SUNKEN submarine presents one of the greatest challenges for the Royal Navy, writes Calum McNicol.

Up to that task are a specialist group who have been put through their paces in Scotland.

The Northern Diving Group, based at HMNB Clyde at Faslane, play a huge role in the successful deployment of the NATO Submarine Rescue System (NSRS), which also operates out of the base.

NSRS is a tri-nation initiative with France and Norway also on board and was introduced in 2006.

It is managed by Rolls Royce but NDG is the only UK military unit to supply specialist personnel to the system. And they do it with only 33 people.

Such a complex system needs frequent testing and personnel from the navies of the three NATO allies gathered at HMNB Clyde to take part in a large-scale, scenario-led exercise over four days.

For the NSRS team, any rescue operation presents two main risks – contamination and decompression. The NSRS offers the crew their best hope for survival, providing the bespoke Transfer Under Pressure (TUP) therapeutic recovery system.

The £130m system can cleanse the crew from contaminants and crucially, re-compress oxygen-saturated sailors – who might have spent long, frightening hours cooped up in dark, cramped conditions in the stricken sub – in a managed, secure environment.

Throughout that process, the Royal Navy and NDG provides a world-class medical facility, from triage to emergency surgical procedures, led by hyperbaric



● LH(D) Bruce McQuillan

medical experts.

All 360 tonnes of equipment that makes up the TUP system is stored in a 150-metre purpose-built hangar at HMNB Clyde. Each piece of the jigsaw is stored in sequence, ready to be loaded on to trucks and then to heavy transport aircraft, for onward transit to the incident. There, NSRS will requisition the nearest appropriate ship on which the entire TUP system can be welded to the stern... all within 72 hours where possible.

Lt Cdr Steve Brown, who runs NDG at Faslane, said: "It is a quite brilliant stand-alone system designed simply to save submariners' lives anywhere in the world."

"Speed is essential in getting to a stricken submarine and the fact that we can be on the move in three hours with 360 tonnes of equipment and a team of around 75 specialists from the UK, France and Norway is impressive in its own right."

The first intervention will be the deployment of the IROV, a small, remotely-operated submersible equipped



● Surg Cdr Richard Webber

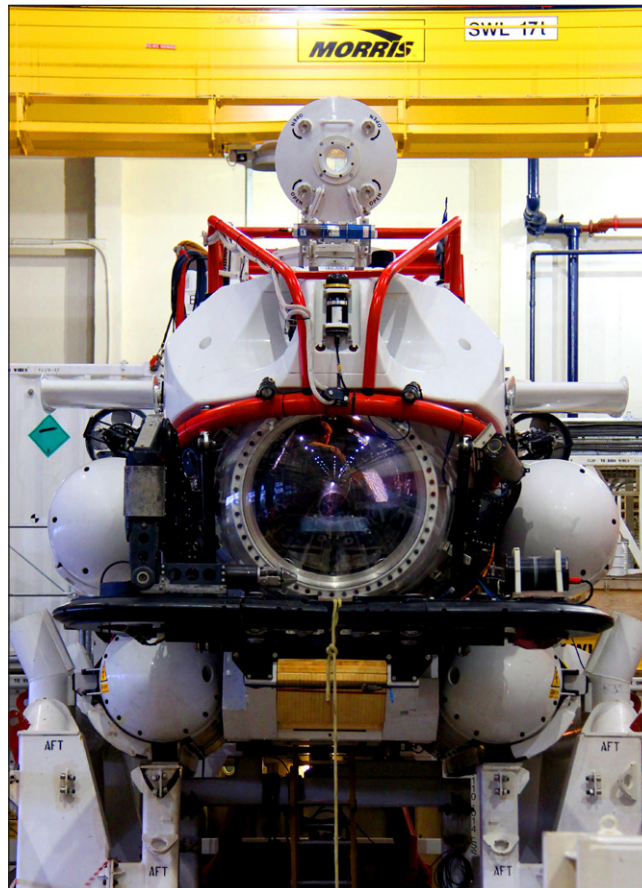
with cameras. In addition to reconnaissance, it offers the chance to insert food and air tubes to the sunken sub.

The Submarine Rescue Vehicle (SRV) is then launched... it's appropriately known in the maritime community as Nemo. This vehicle acts as the ambulance, ferrying rescued submariners to the TUP, effectively the 'hospital' which can hold 35 rescued personnel in each of its two chambers.

One of the bravest men among the NDG personnel tasked on NSRS is the Rescue Chamber Operator, who has the huge responsibility of ensuring it is safe to connect the SRV to the stricken sub – with absolutely no idea what he might find on first opening the hatch. Step forward L(D) Bruce McQuillan.

Bruce, from Sunderland, who has been with NDG for four years, said: "I volunteered for the RCO. I'm just doing a job that I enjoy but I do see that this role is a special challenge."

"I don't feel especially brave, I'm doing a job that we train hard for and it gives me a great deal



● The Submarine Rescue Vehicle, known as Nemo

of satisfaction. We're potentially saving lives, just as we are when we are out on a bomb disposal shout."

Back at the TUP, the medical team are hard at work not only processing those rescued through their recompression, but also treating any medical 'casualties',

many of whom might also be suffering from mental trauma.

Lt Lizzi Ashley, of HMS Vigilant and the first female Medical Officer to serve in HM Submarines, said: "This has been a truly exciting exercise for me to take part in, with a multi-national, multi-agency team delivering first aid."

"I'm delighted to be the first female MO in the Submarine Service, and having an insider's knowledge of the support systems like NSRS which are available is hugely beneficial to our branch."

Surg Cdr Richard Webber, a former submariner and now Head of Undersea Medicine at the Institute of Naval Medicine, was keeping an expert eye on how the teams reacted as the exercise unfolded.

"The public will probably never know when the NSRS deploys – let's hope it never has to in reality," he said.

"But for submariners in the Royal Navy, knowing it's there is comfort enough as they go about their duties in the Silent Service."



THE Royal Navy's newest attack submarine HMS Ambush marked a first as it hosted six students from the UK's Submarine Command Course.

The students are the first to undertake the entire five-month course onboard one of the Navy's new Astute-class submarines.

The course, also known as Perisher because of its challenging nature, is one of the most intense military training and assessment courses in the world.

Only 70 percent of those undertaking Perisher succeed.

HMS Ambush invited the students and course leader Cdr Irvine Lindsay for a familiarisation visit ahead of the start of the course.

Welcoming them was Cdr Justin Codd, the Commanding Officer of HMS Ambush, who found the visit particularly useful as he will become the next leader of the Submarine Command Course.

"The Astute class represent the future of the Royal Navy submarine service," said Cdr Codd, "so it is vital that those who wish to become submarine commanders are fully familiar with the vessels."

"While parts of previous courses have been undertaken onboard an A-boat, this will be the first time the entire course has been run on an Astute-class submarine."

"I was delighted to be able to host the students and to show them around this remarkable vessel."

Of the six students, four are from the Royal Navy, one from the US Navy and one from the French *Marine Nationale*.

Sailors from allied navies have been involved in Perisher from the time of World War 2 onwards, reflecting the high-regard in which the course is held internationally.

The students also had an opportunity to tour the oldest RN submarine in order to fully appreciate how much things have changed.

The group went to the Royal Navy Submarine Museum in Gosport where they visited Holland 1, commissioned by the Navy in 1901.

The UK Submarine Command Course is in four phases, mixing practice ashore on high-tech simulators with practical experience at sea.

At the end of the course the students are put through their paces at sea.



● Rescued men recompress inside the TUP while Lt Lizzi Ashley watches a French medic treat 'Fred'



Pictures: Michael Stephen, Babcock



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● PO(D) Andre Bryant briefs the dive team; The USS Dextrous on patrol in the Gulf; An American Seahawk lands on RFA Cardigan Bay

Having a real blast with our American friends

A MINE-HUNTING exercise turned up the real thing as Royal Navy ship HMS Chiddingfold found a live depth charge.

The ship's clearance divers were dispatched to dispose of the explosive during the incident in the Gulf.

The real-life scenario came as Royal Navy minehunters based in Bahrain were put through their paces in an exercise with the US Navy.

HMS Atherstone, Chiddingfold and Shoreham met up with the US Navy Avenger-class mine countermeasures vessels USS Dextrous and Devastator for a week of testing scenarios.

The task force, supported by RFA Cardigan Bay, searched for mines before tasking their divers or Seafox Unmanned Underwater Vehicle to dispose of them.

Sub Lt Phillip Fordham, HMS Shoreham's navigating officer, said: "Working in the Gulf is helping us to understand the different techniques required to get the best out of kit in a warm-water environment. Working alongside the US Navy has also been great fun."

The final phase of the exercise saw the US Navy's Arleigh Burke-class destroyer USS Mitscher arrive to provide protection for the ships as they simulated survey operations while coming under attack from the air and underwater.

This also gave sailors from both navies the chance to spend time embarked in the opposite nation's warships.

Sub Lt Fergus Holland, currently conducting his specialist training onboard HMS Chiddingfold, said: "I very much enjoyed my day onboard the USS Mitscher, learning how our colleagues do business."

"Despite slight differences in terminology and the number of people onboard, it was good to see that both the US and UK operate in much the same way."

Sub Lt Robert Minns from HMS Atherstone said: "Watching the exercise unfold from the bridge of a US Navy destroyer really put into perspective how complex mine warfare operations are."

Commanding Officer of HMS Atherstone Lt Cdr John Cromie said: "The opportunity to conduct complex mine warfare serials with the US Navy was a hugely rewarding challenge for my ship's company."

"Having just successfully completed a period of sea training prior to deploying to the Middle East, my crew were ready to show what we could do and I am delighted with how we performed throughout the week."

Commander of the UK's Mine

Counter Measures Force Cdr Tim Davy said: "The aim of the exercise was to train and rehearse coordinated mine-hunting and mine-clearance operations, bringing together Royal Navy and US Navy capabilities."

"We have also been able to demonstrate our ability to deploy and sustain a large joint force on mine countermeasure operations, proving our ability to protect freedom of navigation in a region that includes three of the world's six maritime chokepoints."

During the exercise all five of the minehunters made use of RFA Cardigan Bay to replenish (known as rafting up).



● HMS Atherstone moves alongside RFA Cardigan Bay for replenishment during the exercise in the Gulf



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Making a difference

“THIRTY years ago, I stood in front of the then Second Sea Lord and, as a young officer, felt absolutely terrified,” says Vice Admiral Sir David Steel, perched on a sofa in the front room of historic Admiralty House.

“These days I receive about 50 emails every week from sailors of all ranks. Junior ratings feel comfortable speaking with me direct, raising ideas, questions, asking for guidance and bringing to my direct attention matters which concern them. I simply could not be more delighted.”

It’s a reflection of Navy personnel today – just as courteous as in 1985, just as respectful but more questioning and more engaged in the business of their Service than the one the now 53-year-old joined 36 years ago as a budding supply (now logistics) officer.

Three and a half decades later, the now vice admiral is about to hand over the post of the RN’s senior ‘people person’ – overseeing personnel issues, welfare, families, recruitment and all training.

Stepping into that role in 2012, the Admiral could see a proverbial ‘perfect storm’ brewing, particularly in the engineering world.

The loss of a number of ‘sailor-hungry’ ships – Ark Royal and Type 22 frigates under the 2010 Defence Review, Type 42 destroyers at the end of their lives (“you could borrow a sailor for use on another ship and it wouldn’t make a huge difference – you can’t do that with a lean Type 23 or 45”) – the ‘black hole’ caused by the recruiting freeze in the mid-90s (“it takes 20 years to develop a chief petty officer engineer”), the high tempo of operations and a more buoyant market in civvy street, such as the gas and oil industries, all conspired against the RN.

“The past two and a half years have been the toughest of my Naval career. I could see the problems, and set out to tackle them and make the Navy a better place for our people,” says the admiral.

“But no one person in the Royal Navy can make a difference on their own. I’ve been supported by the most extraordinary team, in which each individual has gone well beyond what could be expected of them, working selflessly to make sure things happen for the better.”

Hundreds of initiatives have been adopted to make life better, everything from a revised package of financial retention incentives to the introduction of emergency maternity cover and more support for families, and everything in between.

On their own, the new programmes and changes may look like minor initiatives – “which might not seem much



● Admiral Steel hots the crew of HMS Atherstone aboard HM Victory to thank the minehunting sailors for their efforts in the Gulf

Picture: LA(Phot) Arron Hoare

individually, but the ‘jigsaw effect’ means that, collectively, this multitude of small things does make people’s lives better.”

The admiral is particularly pleased with what’s been achieved to make the Service completely inclusive, allowing everyone to achieve their true potential: “We have been recognised nationally for leading the way in delivering a fully diverse and inclusive workplace, a better place to work for all, regardless of race, gender, or sexual orientation.”

The goal of all these initiatives and programmes, says the admiral, has been “to give our people every reason to stay.”

“After rising at the beginning of the decade, the voluntary outflow rate – sailors handing their notice in to leave – looks to have peaked and is now falling – in some areas dramatically so, as many realise that the ‘grass is not necessarily greener’ in civilian employment,” he says.

“We had a rush to join the maritime security business but those who left, principally marines, are all now re-joining. Likewise with the oil and gas industry. The uncertainty of that business – with the collapse of the oil price – has shown just how beneficial it is to remain in the Service.”

At the opposite end of the Naval spectrum, “we are filling up from below – the recruiting taps are turned on full.” Around 750 people a week now apply to join the Royal Navy – that’s ten times more than the Service requires – “so we must be offering something attractive. They want a career, they want opportunities for excitement, a varied life and, just perhaps, financial certainty for the future.”

Admiral Steel adds: “We’ve gone through a very difficult period – and there will be further difficulties ahead – but I sincerely believe that we are over the worst, have introduced so many good programmes to make life better,

and we can all look forward to a much improved future.

“I’ve not achieved everything I wanted to, time has been too short, but I hope that what we’ve done collectively, the First Sea Lord, Fleet Commander and myself, and everyone else who has been so passionate about improving life for all who serve, will make the Royal Navy an even better organisation than it already is today.

“Everything I do is about improving the lot of our people. If I have helped, even in a very small way, and the 30,000 men and women who serve in the Royal Navy, Royal Marines and RFA recognise the positive changes, then I shall feel satisfied.”

To some degree, the Second Sea Lord likens the RN to the giant of the high street, John Lewis, where employees are partners and benefit from the wider success. “Every man and woman in the Royal Navy is a partner in the business, except ours is a great enterprise of national and international significance. We are all shareholders in the enterprise, and we can all feel proud to ‘own’ such a magnificent organisation.”

And that also explains his drive for openness and accessibility. It’s not just emails.

“It would be very easy to become aloof in this job, tied to a desk, drowning in paperwork, struggling with the system and processes,” Admiral Steel explains.

“So whenever I can, and in addition to my visits to ships and establishments, I invite as many officers and ratings, junior and senior, into Admiralty House, to chat and to see a part of our heritage.

“This house belongs to all who serve and I have been delighted to open its doors so that those who visit can soak up a little of the Navy’s astonishing history and heritage.”

As for the present-day story, it is one the admiral is as proud

of now as he was when he passed through Dartmouth’s gates in 1979.

“No other similar-sized navy does as much as the Royal Navy or so well,” he says. “No other navy would have the professionalism and confidence to send a destroyer around the world on its own, like Daring. It is astonishing what we do.

“And every day the work of the Royal Navy does something which promotes the United Kingdom in a way which no other organisation can. And we do all this with half the number of people who watch Arsenal at the Emirates every fortnight.”

Of the admiral’s 36 years’ service, he found his time in charge of Portsmouth Naval Base between 2005 and 2008 the most interesting – and challenging – days of his career. It was dominated by the – successful – battle to maintain Portsmouth as a working naval base.

Today it seems unimaginable that the city – traditionally regarded as the home of the RN – might lose its naval base. But seven years ago, the prospect was very real, leaving behind Faslane and Devonport, with the new carriers based in Rosyth.

By making savings across the board, the spectre of closure was banished – and in 2015 its future is secure as home of the Queen Elizabeth class, Type 45 destroyers, half the Type 23 flotilla (and its successor Type 26s), with 12,000 people working in it daily.

Many of those changes to Portsmouth the admiral will now have to watch from the sidelines.

“I will miss being part of the next 20 years – new aircraft carriers, new submarines, new frigates, new aircraft and helicopters. The Royal Navy will be at the very heart of the nation’s defence for many years to come; the time for a strong Navy has returned.

“I am exceptionally sad to be leaving the Navy. There’s no other organisation in the world like it. I will miss the people immensely – not just professionally, but also their character, their charm, their inability to say ‘no’ and their willingness to go the extra mile for the sake of the Royal Navy, their oppos and our country.”

Admiral Steel has no immediate plans for his life outside the RN – beyond acting as a trustee for various charities connected with the Service.

“Whatever I go to next will never offer the same opportunities and possess the same people as the Royal Navy,” he says.

“The Navy has offered me incomparable experiences and the most wonderful chances in life. To borrow from our current recruitment campaign, I think of myself as born in Walthamstow, but very much made in the Royal Navy.”



Ram-tastic Gib

THE RN’s Gibraltar Squadron has won one of the most unusual Service trophies.

The squadron received the 2014 Inshore Patrol Vessel Effectiveness Trophy, which is mounted on a set of ram’s horns, for contributing the most to the professionalism and reputation of the Royal Navy.

The origins of the trophy are rather vague, it was selected from the Royal Navy Trophy Store at HMS Nelson in Portsmouth but the original plaque was removed. It is thought to be one of the few RN trophy’s which incorporate ram’s horns.

CO Lt Cdr Rob Garner and his team of 26 sailors, Marines and Reservists, are responsible for protecting British Gibraltar Territorial Waters and providing protection for British and NATO ships entering harbour or in the Strait of Gibraltar.

The award was presented by



the Governor of Gibraltar, Lt Gen Sir James Dutton, at their headquarters on the Rock.

Lt Cdr Garner said: “This is a fast-paced and dynamic area to operate in – we know our actions at sea are closely watched by the people of Gibraltar, and they attract political interest at the highest level back home in the UK.”

Lts Ollie Loughran and Alex Knight command the two patrol boats, HMS Sabre and Scimitar, respectively.

Douglas Maddocks, Sabre’s XO, said: “Being an Executive Officer as a chief or petty officer is a great privilege.

“Having LETs as ship’s engineers has allowed the squadron ME Senior Ratings to take on a more supervisory role in the HQ and giving the Leading Hands more responsibility has allowed them to develop their leadership styles and engineering knowhow.”

Bottom’s up for Anne

THE Princess Royal viewed a Royal Navy warship from the depths of a huge dry dock during a visit to Portsmouth Naval Base.

The Princess climbed down 50 giant steps to see beneath HMS Westminster – the first ship to be refitted in the newly-refurbished 15 Dock.

In her role as Commodore-in-Chief Portsmouth, she met the crew of the Type 23 frigate and workers from BAE Systems which is carrying out the 20-month upgrade.

After the lengthy climb back to the top of the dock, the Princess went on board to see work being carried out on the flight deck, bridge, galley, control centre and 4.5-inch general purpose gun.

The ship’s senior Naval officer, Lt Cdr Tim Ciaravella, said: “The visit by the Princess Royal provided a wonderful opportunity for members of the ship’s company to meet her and talk about the different challenges of working on a ship in upkeep rather than at sea.

“With the ship in dry dock it was also a great opportunity to take a tour of the dock bottom and see the huge amount of work being undertaken.”

The £6m refurbishment of 15 Dock is part of the re-location of activities within the base to free up space for the Royal Navy’s two new aircraft carriers – HMS Queen Elizabeth and HMS Prince of Wales.

On leaving the Naval Base the Princess headed for nearby Horsea Island to visit various units within the Fleet Diving Squadron.

During several demonstrations the special guest was given a flavour of the wide-ranging role of the squadron, from bomb disposal and maritime counter terrorism to shallow-water diving and harbour clearance.

One of the divers introduced to the Princess was Acting LH(D) Ash Mansell, 26, who said: “It was great getting to meet Her Royal Highness and show what the squadron does and the wide variety of skills the units have.”



Project FIREFLY

Daily transferring from Regular to Reserve

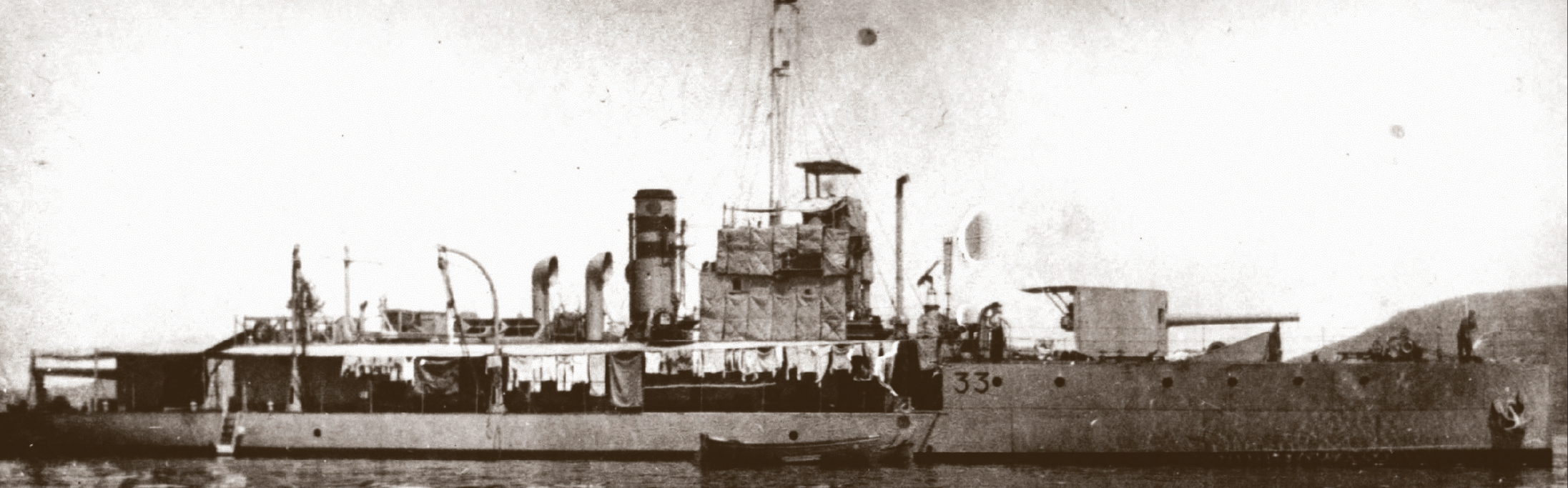
I’m now in civilian employment and enjoying putting the portfolio of skills I learned in the Navy to good use daily.

I miss the Naval camaraderie, however...



Project FIREFLY

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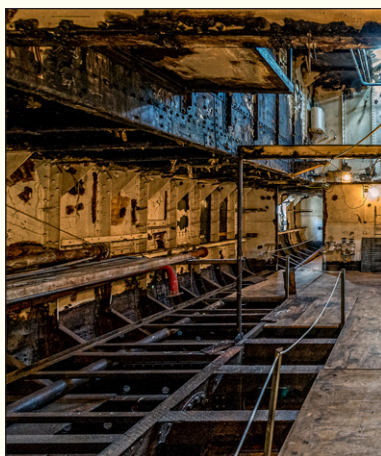
● Washing can be seen hanging out to dry on HMS M33 pictured in 1915 at Mudros, a small port used by the British on the Mediterranean island of Lemnos, about 50km from the Dardenelles Straits



● M33 will be unveiled in August



● Clockwise from above left: M33 sits in No 1 dock in Portsmouth; The interior of M33 has been stripped away during the restoration work; The scene at V Beach at Sedd El Bahr, Turkey, where two Irish battalions landed in April 1915



Pictures: National Museum of the Royal Navy



Visitors can walk along the M33

Gallipoli ship transformed for centenary

A FLOATING metal box lacking in comfort served as home for 72 officers and crew for more than three years.

This summer visitors to M33, currently being restored in Portsmouth, will be able to get a glimpse of life aboard the only surviving British ship from the Gallipoli Campaign.

M33 was of basic build – a platform for a pair of 6in guns – metal without any insulation. For her crew it would have been akin to living in a shipping container, boiling in the heat of the Mediterranean and freezing on the return to the UK.

The crew put up canopies on the decks and over the two guns for shade. The deck would be constantly slopped with seawater in an attempt to get some relief from the unrelenting heat.

M33 is currently under a tarpaulin in No 1 dock alongside HMS Victory at Portsmouth Historic Dockyard undergoing a transformation but will be unveiled in time for the 100th anniversary of the landings at Suvla Bay.

A new visitor centre will be built next to the dock and a lift will take visitors the six metres to the bottom of the basin where they will be able to look up and view the vessel as well as tour her interior.

The history of M33 will be brought alive through new exhibitions, including a battle experience, telling the stories of the men who served on board and the bloody history of Gallipoli, which claimed more than 100,000 lives on both sides and was regarded as one of the biggest failures for the Allied forces during World War 1.

NMRN Project director Matthew Sheldon said: “We are not going to be repainting it and prettying it, you are going to see all the original elements.

“We will deck it but we still want people to see at key points under the frames of the ship and down below.

“There’ll be some stunning audiovisual presentations inside the ship that really take you inside the warship, with sounds echoing the fighting and the firing of its guns.

“You’ll be able to explore all of the spaces like the galley, the wheelhouse; all of those spaces which made the ship a place to live and to work.



● Some of the ship’s company of M33 pictured in 1915; M33’s Leading Signaller Henry Mulligan



“The M33 only had 72 on board – that’s the thing about her. She has relatively big guns but a small crew. She was cheap to build. She was literally seen as expendable. She wasn’t seen as something which would return.”

Ordered, built and commissioned in barely three months, M33 served in the later stages of the ill-fated Gallipoli campaign, including shelling Turkish positions in the Dardanelles in the hope of advancing up the peninsula and seizing Constantinople.

At the war’s end she was dispatched to Russia as part of the campaign to support anti-Bolshevik forces in what was to become known as the Dvina River campaign.

At times the river level was so low M33’s guns were offloaded and carried by cart.

She was hit twice, and her hull still shows the repair after a Bolshevik shell struck in 1919.

She was later converted to a minelaying training vessel as HMS Minerva, served on the Clyde in World War 2 as a floating workshop for boom defences and finally became a floating office supporting the RN’s victualling yard in Gosport.

The Royal Navy decided it no longer required her in the 1980s and she was eventually bought by Hampshire County Council in 1990, to begin the slow restoration process.

M33, now the property of

the National Museum of the Royal Navy, has undergone a £2.4m restoration, during which she was stripped bare. Her gun casings went for repair to Explosion Museum at Gosport.

Her exterior bore black and white dazzle paint designed to confuse German U-boats and her main mess deck is about half the size of a shipping container under the forward gun. Entry was via narrow hatches – a door has now been installed for visitors.

This tiny area was home for 44 of the crew – where they slept and ate. When the gun was fired the mess would shake violently. There was no refrigeration, so the men often survived on ship’s biscuits.

Even though the crew did not return home until Armistice Day, November 1918, there were no casualties.

The other monitors were not so lucky: one sank in 1916 and another two years later.

Along a corridor visitors can see the small wardroom (M33 only had five officers) and the even smaller galley.

The 177ft long, 31ft wide vessel was ordered at the request of Winston Churchill, First Lord of the Admiralty, and First Sea Lord Jackie Fisher in March 1915, built in Belfast, launched in May and commissioned in June.

The ship was ordered after the successful performances of large river monitors, or ‘gunboats’

off the Belgian coast during the early stages of the war.

Commanded by Lt Cdr Preston-Thomas, her first active operation was the support of the British landings at Suvla in August 1915. She remained stationed at Gallipoli until the evacuation in January, 1916.

For the remainder of the war she served in the Mediterranean and was involved in the seizure of the Greek fleet at Salamis Bay on September 1 1916.

M33 is flat bottomed, to enable her to get close to shore and fire at targets on land, but in bad weather it was common for the ship to tilt up to 45 degrees.

The vessel will be the only WW1 ship open to the public.

“HMS M33 is a small ship but has a big history,” said Mr Sheldon.

“Finally we’ll be able to share the story of her part in the Gallipoli Campaign.”

Commemorating Gallipoli – the HMS M33 Project is part of the NMRN’s wider Great War At Sea 1914 – 1918 programme to mark the Royal Navy’s First World War.

Financed by the Heritage Lottery Fund and other donors, the ship will open to the public on August 6, exactly a century since she first saw action.

There is also a special exhibition, *Gallipoli: Myth and Memory*, which opens this month.

The NMRN are also using crowdfunding for the first time to raise money towards the restoration appeal. Visit <https://www.indiegogo.com/at/m33>

Bells toll for sub victims

PERSONNEL from HM Naval Base Clyde gathered in Glasgow and at Faslane Cemetery to remember those who died in the sinking of early submarine K13.

The steam-propelled vessel sank in the Gareloch in 1917 during her sea trials after seawater entered her engine room. On board were 80 men – the ship's crew, 14 employees of a Govan ship builder, five Admiralty officials, a pilot and the captain and engineer of sister submarine K14.

Members of the Royal Navy Submariners Association, personnel from HMNB Clyde and a chaplain from HMS Neptune travelled to Govan's Elder Park where they conducted a service in memory of those Glasgow workers who died.

The next day the congregation attended Faslane Cemetery for a formal wreath laying, complete with standard bearers and a bugler.

Thirty-two men died on board K13 during the disaster. Captain of the vessel, Lt Cdr Godfrey Herbert, and K14's captain, Cdr Francis Goodhart, attempted to escape from the submarine, hoping to reach the surface in order to use their expert knowledge of the vessel to help the rescue.

The brave pair planned to use the space between the inner and outer hatches as an airlock but only Herbert made it to the surface alive. Goodhart sadly died after being trapped in the superstructure of the submarine.

The crew's ordeal didn't end until some 57 hours later when an airline was attached allowing the submarine to bring her bow to the surface. A hole was cut in the side of the vessel allowing the 48 survivors to be rescued. Tragically 32 people died.

Did you have family in the Dardanelles?

ARE you a serving member of the Royal Navy, Royal Marines or RFA with relatives who fought in the Gallipoli campaign?

If the answer is 'yes' then the Royal Navy is keen to hear from you as part of 100th anniversary events of the failed campaign to knock Turkey out of WW1.

The RN will have a substantial contingent of vessels at commemorations around Cape Helles at the foot of the Dardanelles – site of the landings in April 1915 – as well as parties of sailors and Royal Marines ashore.

If you have tangible links with the 1915 battles, contact Lt Cdr Bill Lauste at RN Media and Communications in Leach Building by email (navymediacomms-newsmailbox@mod.uk).

F-35s like it hot and (very) cold

THE FIRST British squadron has begun operational testing of the Royal Navy's fifth generation strike fighters destined for the nation's new aircraft carriers.

17 (Reserve) Squadron, which comprises both Royal Navy and RAF pilots and engineers, was officially stood up at Edwards Air Force Base in sun-soaked California.

The squadron, which was first formed in 1915, will be responsible for all the testing and evaluation of the UK's first F-35B Lightning II aircraft, known as BK-1.

PO Gary Lister, who is responsible for maintaining the ejection seats and crew escape system as well as managing the weapons on the aircraft, said: "The F-35 has a myriad of sensors and technologies which means every aspect of the aircraft is constantly being tested."

"This means when snags are found, they aren't just fixed, but analysed and scrutinised to help future fault diagnosis and streamline the maintenance effort; it's a hugely complex aircraft which will give both the Navy and the RAF a superb capability."

The squadron's Commanding Officer Wg Cdr James Beck said: "For a pilot, it's a dream come true to fly from Edwards Air Force Base. It's where Chuck Yeager (the first pilot to travel faster than sound) flew from and now we're the first nation outside of America to fly the F-35 independently under our own regulations."

Also in the USA, but this time in the sunshine state of Florida, the F-35B underwent extreme weather testing.

The aircraft was subjected to temperatures ranging from 120°F to -40°F in a climatic laboratory at Eglin Air Force Base in Florida. As well as ice, the fifth-



● Ice encases the nose of an F-35B at Eglin Air Force Base in Florida

Picture: Michael D. Jackson, F-35 Integrated Test Force

generation stealth aircraft was tested in wind, solar radiation, fog, humidity, rain, freezing rain, icing cloud and snow.

"While we are testing in the world's largest climatic testing chamber, we're pushing the F-35 to its environmental limits," said test pilot Billie Flynn.

"To this point, the aircraft's performance is meeting expectations."

"It has flown in more than 100 degree heat while also flying in bitter sub-zero temperatures."

"In its final days of testing, it will fly through ice and other conditions such as driving rain with hurricane force winds."

"We are learning more and more about the aircraft every day. The future warfighters can be confident the F-35 will perform in any condition they find themselves in."

With 13 countries currently involved with the program, the F-35 must be tested in meteorological conditions representative of those locations from which it will

operate, ranging from the heat of the Outback of Australia to the bitter cold of the Arctic Circle.

"We've designed an environment here at the chamber where we can simulate virtually any weather condition – all while flying the jet at full power in either conventional or vertical takeoff mode," said Dwayne Bell, McKinley Climatic Laboratory technical chief.

To date, 158 F-35 pilots and more than 1,650 engineers have graduated from training at Eglin. The F-35 has completed multiple weapons tests as well as F-35B and F-35C first-life durability testing. Additionally, the test fleet has conducted two F-35B sea trials aboard the USS Wasp.

From 2018 RAF Marham in Norfolk will be home to 809 NAS and 617 RAF – with both squadrons flying F-35Bs from the HMS Queen Elizabeth and Prince of Wales carriers.

The UK has taken delivery of three F-35B jets to date, which are based at Eglin, Edwards and Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort in South Carolina. Five more aircraft are on order.



● BK-1 at Edwards Air Force Base in California

Picture: Cpl Neil Bryden RAF

Bank fines reap historic rewards

LEGENDS of the skies and a stalwart of the sea will receive hundreds of thousands of pounds of investment to remind tomorrow's generations of the sacrifices by those of yesteryear.

Fines levied on banks for the LIBOR scandal means around £500,000 will be pumped into repairing and buying spare parts – including a Pegasus engine – for two wartime Swordfish torpedo bombers.

And a similar amount will be spent restoring Landing Craft (Tank) 7074 – one of the last surviving vessels from the Normandy landings in 1944.

The LCT was one of around 800 similar craft which disgorged up to ten armoured vehicles at a time on to the beaches. She's the only one left in the UK – and thought to be one of only about a dozen vessels left from the 7,000 which took part in Operation Overlord.

The National Museum of the Royal Navy received nearly £1m from the National Memorial Heritage Fund last month to help with her overhaul.

After a two-day operation to raise her – she was subsequently turned into a floating clubhouse and nightclub before finally falling into disrepair on Merseyside – the veteran craft was brought to Portsmouth last year to await the long process of restoration.

Plans are being discussed to incorporate the ship as part of a revamp of Southsea's D-Day Museum, ahead of the 75th anniversary of the Normandy invasion in 2019 – where National Museum director Dominic Tweddle hopes she would act as "a magnet for visitors, eager to discover more about this essential part of our naval history."

He continued: "This grant will enable us to continue the really important project to conserve the vessel and ultimately put her on display."

As for the two Swordfish – an original Mk1, W5856, and a later Mk2, LS326 – they are centrepieces of the Royal Navy Historic Flight, the Fleet Air Arm's equivalent of the RAF's Battle of Britain Memorial Flight.

The Fly Navy Heritage Trust, which raises money to keep the Flight's vintage torpedo bombers and other legends of naval aviation airborne, expects to receive £500,000 from the £3m of hand-outs to Naval charities announced by Chancellor George Osborne on a visit to Portsmouth at the end of January.

The two Swordfish are the only airworthy models left of nearly 2,400 aircraft built between 1936 and 1944. Last year they made half a dozen appearances at air shows around the UK. Weather conditions and availability allowing, they also carry out fly-pasts at important RN memorial events, such as Battle of the Atlantic commemorations.

"The Swordfish sits at the heart of the nation's Naval aviation heritage and is the embodiment of the ethos, innovation and inspiration of Naval flying," said Rear Admiral Terry Loughran, chairman of the Fly Navy Heritage Trust.

"They are priceless national treasures and this grant will make a real difference enabling us to provide a vital third Pegasus engine and all the spares needed to keep both aircraft flying for many years into the future."

"Keeping the Swordfish flying is not only a living memorial to the service and sacrifice of the 6,750 Naval personnel who have given their lives in Naval aviation, it is also a dynamic and exciting way to bring history to life, educating and informing modern audiences of the important part played by the Royal Naval Air Service and Fleet Air Arm in the history of our nation."



Project FIREFLY

The journey does not have to end!

...I joined the Maritime Reserve before my TX date.

To retain my bonds with the Navy, enhance my skills, good times, great rewards and I continue my day job.

'Best of both worlds, and I'd encourage others to follow'



Project
FIREFLY

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Evolution, not

THE QUEEN Elizabeth-class programme has caught the imagination of those within and beyond the Senior Service.

Judging by the reaction to the naming ceremony for the first of class last summer, aircraft carriers Queen Elizabeth and Prince of Wales look set to claim a place in the affection of the British public.

And there is no disputing that the sheer size of the ships has taken the Royal Navy into new territory – at 65,000 tonnes they displace 20 per cent more than anything else in Royal Navy annals.

But look a little closer and you will find that the building of these two leviathans is no leap in the dark – there are firm, well-proven foundations that have been developed over decades.

Or, as one member of Queen Elizabeth's ship's company observed, "it is evolution, not revolution."

Queen Elizabeth was floated out of Number 1 Dock at Babcock's Rosyth yard less than a fortnight after the July 4 ceremony.

She now sits alongside J/K berth in the main basin which juts out from the north bank of the River Forth, her flight deck cocooned by scaffolding, while her place in the dock is now being steadily filled by Prince of Wales.

'Ship 2' is almost half complete, but is still unrecognisable as a carrier, its steel walls punctured by holes and miles of cables and umbilical ducting snaking from hull to dockside.

Large blocks are scattered around the yard – one sponson dwarfs the adjacent minehunter HMS Ramsey, high and dry on blocks awaiting maintenance.

Despite having been deeply involved in the project – and watching progress on Ship 1 from his office block – Stuart Justice said he was still taken aback when Queen Elizabeth moved out of the dock.

The Aircraft Carrier Alliance (ACA) Deputy Chief Engineer said: "It was only when the ship moved 90 degrees and we saw it beam-on that we realised just how big it is.

"People were saying 'My goodness, it's massive!' It still has the power to surprise."

Mr Justice said that Prince of Wales is progressing at a much faster rate than Queen Elizabeth, thanks to lessons learned from the building of Ship 1.

"We have not had any significant rework in Ship 2 because everything has been tried and tested," he said.

"It is a faster build, and one of the key things has been in terms of build sequence.

THE two Queen Elizabeth-class aircraft carriers under construction in Scotland are the biggest ships ever built for the Royal Navy, but they draw on a wealth of knowledge and experience. Mike Gray reports from Rosyth.

"We found it is better to get the ship joined up as quickly as possible, which means you can get the services in as quickly as possible. All the major blocks are linked up already so we can get it wind and weather-tight to get the outfitting done a lot quicker."

The ACA is a partnering relationship between industry – Babcock, BAE Systems and Thales UK – and the Ministry of Defence, which is both partner and customer.

Using hundreds of contractors around the UK, major blocks of the ships are built at Glasgow, Appledore in Devon, Hebburn in Tyneside, Birkenhead in Merseyside, Portsmouth and Rosyth, and then transported to the Babcock yard at Rosyth where they are assembled.

"The blocks are more advanced for Ship 2 – the build yards around the country have done a fabulous job in ensuring the level of outfit achieved is better in terms of maturity," he said.

Managers have kept an eye on another, nearby engineering project – the main support pillars for a second road bridge rise from the waters of the Forth just a couple of miles away, and the bridge should be finished before Queen Elizabeth leaves Scotland for her new home in Portsmouth.

"We have had regular dialogue with the builders of the Queensferry Crossing, and they have assured us that the span will be no lower than the current Forth Road Bridge," said Mr Justice.

"In terms of the Queen Elizabeth-class project, people from here go to lots of engineering events – I have done a few myself – and the support from the British public is massive.

"Being able to have on your CV that you worked on this programme is not something I will ever surpass in my career."

While work continues apace on the 65,000-tonne twins, there is a parallel but largely unseen programme of work to make sure UK Defence gets maximum use out of these ships.

Typical of that is the role of Damage Control Officer Lt Cdr John Ball, who is overseeing the integration of damage control and firefighting systems and procedures on Queen Elizabeth.

Lt Cdr Ball, a stoker who rose through the ranks, spent four years as a 'wrecker' with Flag Officer Sea Training – setting up fires, floods and other maritime disasters for the ship's team under training to deal with.

"We have got a lot of technology

but a lot of conventional wisdom as well, and I have brought that knowledge here," he said.

"The way I see it is we are marrying the conventional wisdom of what we are already doing with the new technology – it is evolution, not revolution.

"The threats we face – fire, collisions, running aground – haven't changed, but the ways we can deal with them have.

"Here we are not relying on runners and voices, we are relying on the system to do it for us – but if it all goes wrong we can still go back to the manual boards.

"That is the important thing – if we suffer damage, we have to have the ability to go back to that tried and tested methods that work. FOST will come and do that for us.

"I think the key thing to remember is that you can get very fazed by the size of HMS Queen Elizabeth, but it is a ship in the end.

"We have built and commissioned ships before, and that is the road map we need to be following, working closely with industry to get the best of what the ship can deliver – there is a lot of new gear on her and it is a lot of real estate with not many people."

Lt Cdr Ball's team has experience of introducing new ships to the Fleet – for example, his right-hand man, the Whole Ship Q (a warrant officer who is the ship's senior damage control rating) worked on the introduction of HMS Astute to the Fleet.

Indeed, a version of the submariner's task book (a system whereby a sailor learns every vital system on a boat, in order to be able to react quickly to an incident) may be introduced to the relatively lean-manned carriers – they are more than three times the size of the Invincible-class but have virtually the same complement.

"It is not quite as important as in a submarine, but you have got to know what to do in a compartment when you are there on your own and you can shout all you like but there is no one there to help," said Lt Cdr Ball.

His 'office' is the Ship Control Centre and HQ1, where banks of wide touch screens monitor (and in most cases can control) the vital systems of the carrier, including propulsion and power generation.

The watchkeeper – a post that is manned round the clock – also keeps a close eye on the various warning and alarm screens.

"It is a different ship – one of the big step-changes is in firefighting," said Lt Cdr Ball.

"Traditionally we have used a lot of manpower in firefighting, but the ship allows us to use technology to do it for us."

An automated firefighting system incorporates elements such as VESD (Very Early Smoke Detection) – which detects the products of combustion before fire actually breaks out.

Computers apply a level of intelligence, factoring in heat to ensure a piece of overdone toast does not ring alarm bells – but a real incident is dealt with quickly.

"Using these screens, you can drill down to a particular location on board, and can also use a camera to look into certain compartments – so if an alarm is triggered on screen, and the sensors are activated, then you can also take a look to see what is going on," he said.

"Traditionally we use an attack party and support party to tackle a fire. Here we have the ship's input as well as human.

"It is a more advanced variety of what is in offices, using water, gas or foam and touch-screen technology.

"Quartz bulbs break at 68° Celsius and the system will kick into action before anyone can react physically.

"All alarms from the 32 firefighting systems in the ship are fed into here – it is the nerve centre of HMS Queen Elizabeth.

"The fixed system can also deal with oil fires in machinery spaces – different types of sprays are designed to deal with fire in specific areas, and to make sure smoke does not spread."

It is something of an irony that Lt Cdr Ball finds himself working in one of the newest ships in the Royal Navy, as he had set his mind on a Jutland veteran.

"I was going to leave the Royal Navy at the age of 50 last year, but I got an extension which has allowed me to bring my specialist knowledge forward onto this platform," he said.



"I was looking at a job with HMS Caroline – I had an interest and could have helped with the regeneration of the ship in an engineering role.

"But then the chance to sign on again came up, and I am happy I went this way."

Members of the 140-strong ship's company regularly work on board Queen Elizabeth alongside the ACA workforce, learning the ropes and preparing to turn the ship into a warship.

The medical complex is one of the most easily-recognisable areas of the carrier, with the reception area clearly resembling that of a doctors' surgery.

POMA Lily O'Gorman is part of a ten-strong team that will provide medical and dental care to the ship and her task group, using a small, sea-going hospital (one isolation bed, two high-dependency beds, three hospital beds and six bunk spaces for patients under observation, as well as a dental practice with lab facilities and an X-ray machine).

"I am really looking forward to working on board Queen Elizabeth," said the senior rate, who joined the ship in November.

"I came from a Type 23 frigate, so the opportunities here are much greater.

"My main role is medical stores manager, looking after all the equipment – I have to make sure we have enough of it and none of it is out of date.

"But I, like every medic, am available if required for treatment of casualties – all hands are involved when required."

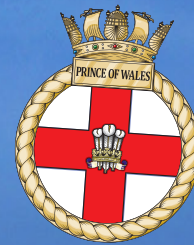
Also concerned with stores – though on a somewhat larger scale – is WO1 Gavin White, who is overseeing the initial storing up of Queen Elizabeth.

From the 'First Outfit and Storing Cell' WO White will ensure that the carrier's cavernous store rooms are properly stocked, whether it be pens, galley utensils, boots, firefighting kit or linen.

"Over the next couple of years we will be preparing various loads to allow the ship's company to sustain work on board," said WO White.

Just about

t revolution...



is essential work."

Again the size of the ship is a major factor – something that is very much in the mind of Senior Naval Officer Capt Simon Petitt.

"The size of HMS Queen Elizabeth is the most dominating feature of the ship, which allows us to orchestrate activities on the flight deck more easily, enabling us to deliver the number of sorties we need to deliver.

"The design specification was for 72 sorties per day, peaking at 108 – in that sense we are talking regional airport-sized activity here.

"But it is not just the flight deck that is huge – the ship also has spacious compartments and passageways.

"The ship has been designed extremely well – the spatial layout is fantastic.

"A frigate or destroyer is basically a weapons system wrapped in a ship which carries it around the world.

"A carrier is more about logistics and routine – it is a logistics organisation.

"It is there to maintain and support the aircraft, and we learned a lot from the CVs [Invincible-class ships] about things like the flow of people, supplies, catering stores and maintenance equipment.

"All those lessons have been built into these ships. For example, the food stores are directly below the galleys and linked by a lift, which saves time in making it easier to store ship and access stores.

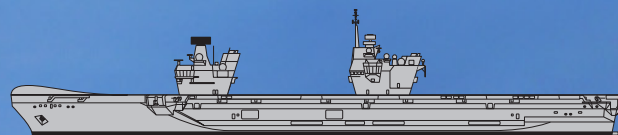
"We should be able to cut time spent alongside storing for urgent operations by a third.

"In terms of technology, we are focussing usable technology to meet our automation needs.

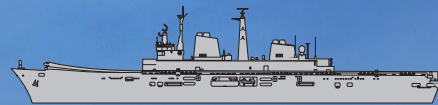
"One example is the unmanned magazine and Highly Mechanised Weapon Handling system – a cross between an Amazon warehouse and a high-end car production line.

"And the firefighting systems around the ship are mostly automatic – yes, we have got such systems already on other ships, but here we have taken them a step further, linking them by computer.

"The technology has been focused predominantly on automation that allows us to deliver a huge range of missions,



HMS Queen Elizabeth
679 crew



HMS Illustrious
685 crew

everything from striking, using jets deep into enemy territory, to something more benign, as with Daring and Illustrious helping victims of the typhoon in the Philippines.

"You can influence so much simply by being in the situation. Yes, we can wage war, but we are also so capable we can deter war.

"We can influence what happens around the world in most situations in the best way for Defence – don't forget that these two ships will carry soldiers and airmen as well as sailors."

But before the carriers spread their influence, there is work to be done in Rosyth.

"I have got 140 or so sailors working under my command, and our primary responsibility is to learn about the ship and write the operating manual – ship's orders, standard operating procedures and so on," said Capt Petitt.

"Then we have to grow the ship's company to around 700, and make sure they are trained to operate the ship effectively and fight it effectively.

"I have got a lot of engineers commissioning equipment on the ship, doing what they joined the Royal Navy for – getting their hands dirty as they learn the kit.

"Perhaps the most important job we have to do is create an ethos, a tenor for HMS Queen Elizabeth that survives the next 50 years and also does justice to the name of the ship and the name of our monarch – it is fantastic for this country and it is important that this ship has that sort of feeling.

"The job we are doing up here is very important – and everyone is



enjoying themselves."

While Prince of Wales takes shape, Queen Elizabeth is racking up milestones on a monthly basis.

Her main diesel generators will be fired up for the first time in five years within the next couple of months – the first pumps are already running and water already courses through some of her veins.

The high voltage system is live, many compartments already draw power from the ship's own network, rather than temporary cables, and the radar and mission systems are being

tested on the South Coast.

The two carriers are being built with future – as yet unknown – development in mind.

One example is the blown-fibre or cable-jetting capability – ducts are installed with spare capacity, and as new servers and terminals are added fibre optic cable can be spooled out and blown through ducting and appropriate junctions to the point it is required, doing away with the need for complete access to the ducting.

"Queen Elizabeth and Prince of Wales are strategic defence assets which are agile, flexible and play a really important role in influencing abroad for the benefits of the UK," said Capt Petitt.

"They have to have space to alter their configuration for whatever tasks they are required to perform in future.

"Queen Elizabeth's first commanding officer will arrive here next year, and we must have the ship – and the ship's company – ready for when that happens."

every item that is not bolted to the hull – except food and stores for the air wing – for the ship's 3,200 compartments will pass through WO White's warehouse, possibly as many as 50,000 separate lines or types of store.

"This cell is 100 yards from the embarkation point, which makes things relatively straightforward – to give you an idea, the store for the Type 45 destroyers was in Portsmouth, 450 miles from where the ships were being fitted out in Scotstoun..."

The cell is an old warehouse taken over by the Queen Elizabeth team 18 months ago, and reconfigured with racking and storage media to replicate the 19 store rooms on board.

Most of the store rooms are supported by the forward aircraft lift, while further internal lifts help the 21-strong stores team distribute items swiftly to where they are needed.

Storing ship is a highly-mechanised operation, using lifts, trolleys and forklift trucks, and under ideal conditions, with all lifts and a dockside crane available, the stores team should be able to

handle storing without the need for extra hands.

WO White is planning for when the crew begins to move on board – he believes he can stock the store rooms in two weeks.

While some hone shipwide strategies, others are already paying attention to the detail.

People like LET Helen Thomson, currently part of the satellite communications team, who is working with colleagues to check all the loudspeakers on board the carrier – a total of 2,000 or more scattered between the bridge and the machinery space, including the upper deck.

"We have to locate each speaker, open it up, log the serial number and check the cabling inside," said LET Thomson.

"We make sure the correct type of speaker is in the correct place so when they switch on they do not blow, and that it is on the correct power setting.

"How long it takes depends – some days we can do maybe up to 30, if they are close together and easy to reach.

"Other days we might have to find a ladder to deal with them if they are inaccessible.

"It can be a bit repetitive, but it



Taught to listen in at Mercury

THE article on the HMS Mercury plaque ceremony in the December issue of *Navy News* brought back memories for this former telegraphist.

For it was at Mercury that we were taught to intercept Japanese wireless messages prior to being shipped out to HMS Anderson in Ceylon (Sri Lanka) where I served for the final two years of World War 2.

I noted that there was no mention in the article of Bea Lillie, the famous actress who I believe became Lady Peel, and whose family donated that beautiful estate to the Navy for so long.

I remember the Butler buildings in which we lived, cold in the winter and hot in the summer, but infinitely preferable to the living conditions on the two Royal Navy destroyers on which I had previously served.

An added delight for we who had been to sea was the presence of Wrens. And therein lies another story!

HMS Mercury remains the most pleasant memory of my Service in the Royal Navy.

Ken Tipper
Ocala, Florida, USA

Dizzy was the dancer

IN the January edition of *Navy News* you included a letter from D Kelly accompanied by photographs taken during HMS Warrior's time at Christmas Island in 1957 (when she was the Command Ship for the first British H-bomb tests in May of that year) and subsequent cruise round the South Sea Islands and South America.

The photograph purporting to be of the ship's Cdr Robin Begg was in fact of Midshipman Gillespie ("Dizzy") Robertson.

The Commander was the subject of the other photograph. They had very different physiques.

There were ten midshipmen in the Warrior gunroom – we think it was the last sea-going gunroom in the Royal Navy – and nine of us have kept in touch ever since and have regular reunions.

We are in the process of writing a book about the ship's unusual ten-month deployment, which we are hoping to publish.

Jeremy Riches
Ex-midshipman HMS Warrior
Patttingham, Staffordshire

Bad weather lands stoker in hot water



● Aircraft on the deck of HMS Indefatigable in the Mediterranean a few years earlier in 1942

IT IS 1948 and the carrier HMS Indefatigable is in reserve, swinging to a buoy off Ryde, Isle of Wight.

I was one of the care and maintenance crew, a stoker whose main job consisted of keeping a check on oil fuel levels and transferring oil from the wing tanks to the steaming tanks beneath the boiler room, making sure, as you did so that the ship remained upright with no sign of a list.

One particular night the officers were entertaining guests on board and a severe gale had sprung up, causing the ship to become what we knew as 'wind rode' ie, laying across the tide with the tide pushing the underwater part of the hull one way while the wind on the upper works was forcing them the other way, the result being a 2-3 degree list to the starboard in this case.

Around 21.00 the duty

stoker was piped to report to the wardroom flat where I was informed by the officer of the watch that the ship had a list.

I attempted to explain the position to him but was told, in no uncertain manner that this was not his concern and I was to get the list off and bring the ship upright.

I went below, transferred the necessary amount of oil to achieve this and then turned in, still smarting at what I considered an unjustified rebuke.

Next morning when I awoke the wind had dropped, the sea was calm and the ship was once again streaming the tide but, I was somewhat gratified to see, now with a 2-3 degree list to port.

I was denied, however, the pleasure of seeing the face of the officer who had castigated me the night before.

Brian Allchorn
Ex-stoker mechanic
Eastbourne

Simulators key for hands-on training

Fell for joke at the chemist

RE: THE 'Future Perfect' article in the December issue of *Navy News*.

Having been in Barrow-in-Furness when HMS Resolution was being built, Royal Navy personnel were allowed to visit a full-scale wooden mock-up of the submarine. It was built to aid construction of the boat.

Although some of the compartments were not laid out to each other in the correct order it didn't matter that much as being able to learn and sight where all the components in each compartment was extremely helpful.

I left Resolution as a qualified Chief of the Watch and was later drafted to be the first instructor for the Resolution class Manoeuvring Room Simulator, FASMAT 1. This experience showed me the power of 'hands-on training', which only a simulator can give covering all normal and emergency drills likely to be encountered.

After leaving the RN I was employed as a simulator maintenance engineer. This led to leading a team in the design and supply of Manoeuvring Room Simulators for the MOD.

JACKPOT!



Each month Pusser's Rum are offering to courier a bottle of their finest tipple to the writer of our top letter. This month's winner is John Clarke

During this time in 1985 one of the early simulator's instructor's controls were via 'touchscreen VDU'. This was in the infancy of touchscreen control; the detection of touch was by Infrared arrays in the sides of the VDU housing.

I was and still am an enthusiast for the use and development of technology that provides a user with intuitive, 'inviting' input. The technology has improved tremendously over the past few years. This has given an instructor greater flexibility.



● The article which prompted John Clarke's letter

During the early 1990s I could visualise the power of using virtual reality for training purposes. Reflecting back to the time in Barrow and the use of the full-scale mock up, in 1993 the company I worked for became part of a multi partnership of 12 companies with a VR Solutions team in Salford. This was set up to explore and develop VR for use in industry.

This resulted in creating a specific VR demonstration for each company. The design at the time was restricted to

the application software and computing processing.

In 1995 my company placed a small contract with a university in Nottingham to produce a demonstration that showed what could become a very good training tool. This allowed the user to navigate around compartments in a submarine either with the restriction of solid objects or changing to a 'ghost' mode to be able to pass through bulkheads and decks. For instance it could also be used to demonstrate, for example, how to access the brushes in a motor generator for maintenance.

I read, with great interest, the article in the *Navy News* and although this was a limited view of the capability I couldn't see that there has been any great leap forward in the development.

I have been in touch with a leading professor in VR and he shares my view that although there has been a tremendous development in processing power and application software, the same human-centred design or human-factor mistakes are being made when developing integrated VR solutions. A great pity.

John Clarke
Derby

IN 1956 I joined my first ship HMS Jamaica as a boy seaman. We were based in Grand Harbour, Valletta.

After a few months I decided to go ashore on a rabbit run (excursion to buy gifts).

Going through the messdesk a National Serviceman in my division asked me if I would do him a favour and pop into the chemist just off Kingsway and get him a packet of Reynolds.

After a few wets I went looking for the chemist (unbeknown to me Reynolds were a birth control pill). The chemist was full of pregnant Servicemen's wives chatting and knitting away.

I asked for the Reynolds. The women fell silent as the chemist asked what I wanted them for.

I said they were for my mate onboard and he suffers from migraines. The place erupted in laughter as the chemist told me to tell my mate to come and get them himself.

I left still oblivious to why everyone was laughing. Back on board I told the Serviceman what had happened and he burst out laughing, saying he was going out with a tug master's daughter, hence the need for the pills.

There is a lot of truth in the saying ignorance is bliss.

B Riddle
Sunderland

Followed great uncle Fun at dance

I WAS pleased to read in January's *Navy News* that the Australian Submarine Service celebrated its centenary. There was a special mention of the AE1 and AE2.

My interest is the fact that the coxswain of AE1 CPO Thomas Martin Guilbert was my father's uncle (my great uncle).

He was born at St Peter's Port in Guernsey. In January 1900 he joined the Royal Navy as a boy at HMS Ganges when she was a wooden hulk moored at Harwich prior to becoming a shore establishment.

Thomas Guilbert married father's

auntie in 1907. Unfortunately my father didn't know his uncle but was always friendly with his son.

I have some photographs of the AE1 and AE2 memorials and Thomas Guilbert's Service record.

While serving as a boy aboard HMS Ceylon during the Korean War an ex-submariner encouraged me to volunteer for submarines.

This I did but my parents were none too pleased, probably due to the uncle's loss of life.

John Wyeth
Hampshire

I HAVE just received my January edition of *Navy News* and read the article 'in the mood for dancing' with amused interest.

The large commander in the left-hand picture was Cdr Robin Begg (long since deceased) the ship's XO. The figure in the right-hand picture was a senior lieutenant, who was the liaison officer for the visit to Raratonga.

I was a junior Sub/Lt at the time and did not feature in any of the photos.

Sorry to disappoint D Kelly and his long-ago memories.

It was a good visit.

Capt Guy O'Donnell, Rtd
Florida, USA



LETTERS to the editor should always be accompanied by the correspondent's name and full address, not necessarily for publication.

E-mail correspondents are also requested to provide this information. Letters cannot be submitted over the telephone.

If you submit a photograph which you did not take yourself, please make sure that you have the permission for us to publish it. Given the volume of letters, we cannot publish all of your correspondence in *Navy News*, nor can we reply to every one.

We do, however, publish many on our website, www.navynews.co.uk, accompanied by images.

We look particularly for correspondence which stimulates debate, makes us laugh or raises important issues. The editor reserves the right to edit your submissions.

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Snow, rain, gales — no problem, we're Reservists

ROYAL Marines are trained to operate in all conditions but the latest batch of Reservists to come through the Marines' training base at Lympstone have had to endure some particularly challenging conditions.

The exercise they undertook on Dartmoor coincided with some of the worst weather seen in England this winter. The recruits experienced a combination of heavy rain, cold temperatures, snow and high winds.

Royal Marines Reservists (RMR) train at their unit locations across the country throughout the year but come together for assessment at the Commando Training Centre near Exmouth in Devon.

Their training is broken into phases with Phase 1A being basic military training, including fitness, map reading, weapon training, camouflage and concealment, and fieldcraft (the ability to live and operate tactically outdoors).

At the end of Phase 1A the recruits complete a test exercise done by all Marines recruits called Baptist Strike where all their military skills are practised. Following this they start doing tactical battle training and the fitness training ramps up as they approach the commando tests.

The end of Phase 1B comes between 12-15 months after the start of training and starts with a five-day exercise on Dartmoor called Daggers Thrust, swiftly followed by the four famous Commando tests – endurance course, nine-mile speed march, Tarzan assault course and 30-mile march.

Prior to the start of the exercise the recruits spend a day practising vertical assault drills with Mountain Leaders



● RMR recruits complete vertical assault drills with Mountain Leaders on Dartmoor
Pictures: LA (Phot) Dean Nixon

on cliffs near Princetown on Dartmoor.

"The weather was really challenging," said Stephen Mulholland, 24, a panel beater from Gateshead, Tyne and Wear.

"You had to be on the ball to stay in the field in those conditions. At one stage the sun was belting down and it was lovely and an hour later there was hail coming in sideways and then it snowed."

Royal Marines are proud of their ability to operate in cold weather environments and deploy regularly to Norway. However the conditions on Dartmoor were equally challenging because of the combination of heavy rain and gale-force winds followed by clear skies and sub-zero night-time temperatures which the recruits endured "sleeping" under their ponchos.

"The weather was really bad on the final exercise," said Ben Revett, 31, a procurement consultant from Fulham.

"But I was OK because I'd been trained well by my team

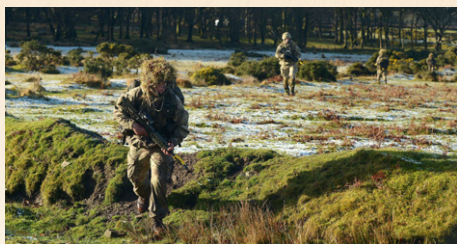
in RMR London. The most challenging part of working in those conditions was the personal admin, just keeping yourself fit and dry."

James Holmes, 25, a manager for the Post Office in Bradford, added: "It's really tough and very challenging. When your morale's low and then something else happens and you think I've just got to keep going and keep going."

On completion of the final exercise the remaining recruits attempted the four Commando tests on consecutive days.

At the end of the 30-mile march the recruits were presented with their Green Berets to show they have completed Commando training.

"I hope people understand the challenges we face as Reservists as opposed to Regulars," added Ben. "We have to take it on ourselves to do our training. We have to be very self sufficient. It takes a certain type of person to be a Royal Marines Reservist. You have to have commitment."



Shopping for new recruits

YOU'RE better off in the RNR was the message to staff at a supermarket distribution centre.

Members from Ceres Division in Leeds visited the Asda site in Normanton to talk to workers about opportunities in the Royal Naval Reserve.

Based in Leeds, Ceres Division, is part of HMS Calliope and the only RNR unit in Yorkshire.

LH Hannah Lee said: "We have all sorts of jobs available for people."

"This year we have people deploying to the US, Bahrain, Dubai, Cyprus and Gibraltar and we really enjoy the experience of going to different places as well as continuing our training. It's an amazing thing to do in your spare time."

Jack Lawtey said: "Asda is a supportive employer and recognised by SaBRE (Supporting Britain's Reserve Employers). We realise that the skills that these young men and women learn in the Reserve forces are easily transferred into the civilian workplace."

Ceres CPO Janice Gurney said: "We are always delighted to visit businesses to inform both employees and employers about the benefits that can be had by working in partnership with the RNR."

To book a visit from the RNR in Yorkshire contact CPO Gurney on 01904 668 687.

If you are interested in joining the RNR in Yorkshire call 01904 668 687 or email nayvmr-calliopecereswsc@mod.uk



● LH Hannah Lee, Stephen Carter and CPO Janice Gurney

Packing a punch on Ocean

FIVE Royal Navy Reserve amphibious warfare officers joined HMS Ocean for two weeks.

The five, led by trainer Lt Cdr Clive Langmead, were taking part in Exercise Suffolk Punch off Lowestoft in a lumpy North Sea.

The five were aboard to be requalified in ship-to-land manoeuvres and plan and control – the offloading of assault troops and vehicles by helicopter and landing craft.

Running the STOM desk in the amphibious operations rooms of the UK Response Force Task Group ships is a pivotal and complex task 'keeping all the plates spinning' so regular sea training on the amphibious platforms is vital.



● From left, Lt Cdr David Lloyd, Lt Cdr Clive Langmead (standing), Lt Richard Hamilton, Lt Cdr James Taylor (seated), Lt Rob Mackie and Lt Richard Notley aboard HMS Ocean



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Windfall will fund 'super projects'

IT HAS been a remarkable few weeks for the charity, following announcements from the Chancellor and Chief Secretary to the Treasury that we will receive £4m from LIBOR fines levied on the banking sector.

While this support for our vision – a world in which our sailors, marines and their families are supported, for life – is most welcome, it carries with it a strong sense of responsibility to ensure that this money contributes towards those projects that will have the most immediate impact on the wellbeing of our beneficiaries, the Naval Service family.

When the charity last met with the Navy Board we agreed a more strategic approach to funding major projects that support our serving personnel and their families, and have been working closely with Navy Command since on prioritising our funding.

That process helped us identify the need for better family accommodation in HMS Nelson, an upgraded WO and SRs mess at HMS Sultan and the need to create a really modern family-friendly community centre at the Drumfork Club in Helensburgh.

All of these fall firmly into our charitable aims to improve morale and efficiency.

I have no doubt that, boosted by this extra capacity, we'll be better placed to fund even more 'super projects' such as these; projects that will ultimately leave a legacy far into the future.

We look forward to working on all of the projects highlighted by the LIBOR funding announcement, with all the teams involved, and will keep you posted as to how things progress.

Robert Robson

Chief Executive Officer
The Royal Navy and
Royal Marines Charity

£4m LIBOR funding for Navy's charity

HUNDREDS of Naval Service personnel and their families are set to benefit from £4m of LIBOR funding given to the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity.

An initial £2m was announced by Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne whilst visiting Portsmouth Naval Base in January.

Shortly after, Chief Secretary to the Treasury Danny Alexander pledged a further £2m. Both sets of funding will help fund a variety of family-centric projects across Naval bases and communities in England and Scotland.

Such charitable projects include the refurbishment of the WO and SRs Mess in HMS Sultan in Gosport, the renovation of family accommodation in HMS Nelson in Portsmouth, a contribution towards the rebuilding of the Drumfork Club community centre in Helensburgh and support and guidance for Naval Service families via the Naval Families Federation.

The funds follow a £1m donation to the RNRMC's affiliated charity, the Royal



● The charity's Chief Executive Robert Robson and Anne Carr, Head of Grants, visit the Warrant Officers' and Senior Rates' Mess at HMS Sultan

Picture: LA(Phot) Dave Jenkins

Marines Charitable Trust Fund, in 2014, which is being used toward a families and welfare centre at CTCRM in Lympstone.

Speaking in Portsmouth, the Chancellor said: "Servicemen sacrifice so much to keep our

nation safe, and we will invest into projects such as refurbishing the Mess at HMS Sultan and renovating the Navy Mews so they can spend times with their loved ones when they are deploying."

Speaking of the Drumfork centre, Mr Alexander said: "This £2m will make a huge difference to thousands of Royal Navy and Royal Marines personnel and their families living in Argyll and Bute, who provide so much support to our vital submarine operators at HM Naval Base Clyde."

Robert Robson, Chief Executive Officer of the RNRMC, explained that the funds will enable the charity to support its sailors and marines and their families far into the future.

He said: "They [the projects] reflect our strategic partnership with the Royal Navy, the national scope of the charity and our determination to respond to our beneficiaries' needs."

"I am delighted that we will be able to help mums, husbands and children cope with the stresses and strains that accompany Service life."

More than £60m has been raised to support Armed Forces personnel from the fines levied on banks for manipulating the London Interbank Offered Rate (LIBOR) financial benchmark.

News in brief

■ THE Yeovil Marathon, held in aid of the RNRMC and the Yeovilton Military Wives Choir, takes place on June 14.

Entry costs £30 and there are only 500 places available – see www.yeovilmarathon.com

■ LIAM Armstrong from RNAS Culdrose was forced to abandon his record-breaking attempt to run the Devon-Land's End (DEVLE) coastline due to poor weather.

Regardless, he still raised over £1,000 for the charity – what a champ!

■ SCHOOLCHILDREN are being asked to design a World War 2 poster for Red, White and Blue Day 2015.

Winners will have their designs printed and framed, with the runners-up receiving book tokens.

Schools can sign up at www.redwhiteblueday.co.uk

Book soon!

THERE is still time to book tickets for the Mountbatten Festival of Music, which takes place on April 16-18 at the Royal Albert Hall.

Featuring the Massed Bands of Her Majesty's Royal Marines, the concerts display the outstanding versatility of some of the world's finest military musicians and are given the West End treatment with spectacular lighting effects.

Proceeds from the event go to the Royal Marines Charitable Trust Fund and CLIC Sargent.

Tickets are available online and from the Royal Albert Hall Box Office on 0845 401 5045.

The only way is down... Aston Martin up for grabs

THE most ambitious charity fundraising event in the City of London's history will see 40 thrill-seekers abseil down three of the capital's iconic buildings.

The Outward Bound Trust City Three Peaks Challenge, in association with the RNRMC, will see the first descents of the outside of 30 St Mary Axe ('the Gherkin'), The Leadenhall Building ('the Cheesegrater') and 20 Fenchurch Street ('the Walkie Talkie').

No more than 40 philanthropists, adventurers and entrepreneurs will abseil 1,916ft in total, completing the descent of each tower one after the other.

The event expects to raise over £4m – the Descent of the Shard that the Outward Bound Trust organised in 2012 raised £2.8m.

Nick Barrett, Chief Executive of the Outward Bound Trust, said: "Never before has anyone abseiled down these three major London landmarks. This is an unprecedented and jaw-droppingly exciting challenge."

Karla Conway, Head of Major

Partnerships at the RNRMC said: "This is by far one of the most ambitious challenges set by the charity – and obviously one of the most unforgettable."

"The City Three Peaks Challenge represents a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for those brave enough not only to enjoy a unique and fantastic experience, but also make a real difference to the lives of the naval family."

The event, on September 7, will again be facilitated by the Royal Marines, who assisted in the Descent of the Shard.

Each participant or organisation will commit to raising at least £100,000.

Cold comfort

FROM the provision of ski-suits to Nordic biathlon rifles, a cool £30,000-worth of funding from the RN's charity and its partners helped the RN Winter Sports Association get off to a flying start at the Alpine Championships in Tignes, Val Claret.

THE Royal Marines Charitable Trust Fund (RMCTF) is running a major prize draw that will see one lucky ticket holder faced with a very tough decision – to take the keys to a brand new Aston Martin or £75,000.

The car was donated by entrepreneur, philanthropist and RMCTF trustee David Weil, and it was his intention that the RMCTF would raise at least double the car's value – so the idea of the Royal Marines Prize Draw was born.

It is hoped that the charity will raise £1m to support serving and retired Royal Marines.

Tickets, which are £10 each, went on sale on February 2 and will be available until the draw coming to a close on Friday September 4.

Throughout the summer the RMCTF fundraising team will be taking the car to events across the country, including the Army vs Navy match at Twickenham in May and Bournemouth Air Festival in August.



● Royal Marines Charitable Trust Fund trustee and philanthropist David Weil hands over the keys to the Aston Martin

Richard Kenworthy, Head of Fundraising and Marketing for the RMCTF said: "This is a huge challenge and, as Royal Marines are not known for backing down from a challenge, we didn't think that we could either."

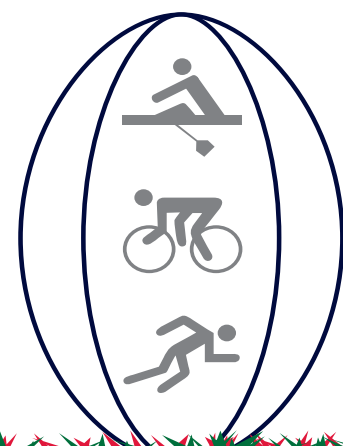
"A minimum of £9 from every £10 ticket bought will come directly to the RMCTF."

"So in buying tickets for this draw, not only are you supporting

the Corps family, but you also have the added chance that you may also become the proud owner of this fantastic vehicle."

You can buy tickets at rmctf.org.uk/raffle or by calling 0870 241 3495.

Ticket selling and marketing packs are available for people that would like to sell tickets on RMCTF's behalf – please call the charity.



the road to
TWICKENHAM

GO THE DISTANCE!
MAKE EVERY MILE COUNT!

You can help us wherever you are in the world by taking part in a run, row, swim or cycle.

Your challenge is to cover the number of miles you are from Twickenham before the Army v Navy rugby game. For example, if you are based in Portsmouth, you could row 80 miles. If you are based in Lympstone you could cycle 180 miles. You could do this individually or as part of a team, with your starting point being your unit, ship's current location or your affiliated town. Raising sponsorship will help your charity care for you, your family and oppos.

Register now and measure up to the challenge!
Search 'Road to Twickenham' on the Virgin Money Giving website or contact:
fundraising@rnrmc.org.uk T: 023 9254 8289

Registered charity in England and Wales (1117794) and Scotland (SC041898).

rnrmc.org.uk/events/roadtotwickenham

ROYAL NAVY &
ROYAL MARINES
CHARITY

FUNDRAISERS OF THE MONTH TEAM REID'S BRECON CHALLENGE



UNPERTURBED by the thought of traversing some 5,000m worth of inclines over ten Welsh peaks, Abbi and Gareth Reid – aka 'Team Reid' – well and truly took the Brecon Beacons challenge by the horns. The husband and wife duo managed to raise over £1,000 during their 102km slog. Well done!

Charity Snippets

AN RN nurse had her head shaved as part of a fundraiser in memory of her baby daughter.

CPONN Robyn Bennett raised funds for the Paediatric Intensive Care Unit in Southampton where her daughter Sydney died at 22 days' old after contracting Group B Streptococcus.

"Hopefully by spreading the word and helping the units that look after critically-ill babies, fewer families will have to suffer the loss of a child like we have," said CPONN Bennett.

To donate visit <http://www.justgiving.com/Sydney-Bennett>

RNBT would like to express special thanks to Russ Heaysman and Vicki Hamlyn of the stores department at the Defence Diving School, who organised a raffle.

All staff at the Horsea Island-based unit bought tickets and the proceeds were divided between their two chosen charities, Naomi House and the RNBT.

A GROUP of Service wives called The Swags are to take part in the 26-mile Kilt Walk in Glasgow on April 12.

The group, which includes a couple of Naval personnel, are walking to raise funds for children's charities, including Funny Lumps, which supports children with Neurofibromatosis and their families.

To sponsor them visit <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/team/theswags>.

Former Royal Marine Taff Davies, 63, from Arbroath is to yomp 1,262 miles from John O'Groats to Lands End.

The 85-day trek, which starts on May 2, will raise funds for Cancer Research UK, Alzheimer Scotland and the RMCTF.

Harmonious way to help those in need

A GROUP of Cornish singers released a shipwreck-themed CD at the National Maritime Museum in Falmouth, to raise money for the Shipwrecked Mariners' Society.

The CD, by Stamp and Go, contains five original tracks of 'wreck and rescue' all written by member Nigel Hallworth and performed by the group from Perranporth in Cornwall.

Having helped raise awareness of the society and its work in the past, the five singers were keen to use the CD, which contains a track commemorating the society's 175th anniversary, as a fundraiser.

Group member Stuart Thorn said: "Having written a song commemorating the founding of the society in 1839 we thought it would be great to develop that into a new CD which can be sold to raise funds for such a worthy cause."

Cdre Malcolm Williams, Chief



● Stamp and Go have released a shipwreck-themed CD

Executive of the Shipwrecked Mariners' Society, said: "We are very grateful to Stamp and Go for recording this new CD – the proceeds of which will help us

continue our work supporting those from the seafaring community suffering hardship and distress.

"When we first heard their

dedicated track we were very impressed and we are delighted there is now a longer CD to enjoy."

The charity provides financial support to ex-fishermen, merchant mariners and their dependants in need and also to those injured or too ill to continue working at sea.

In the last year the Shipwrecked Mariners' Society handled 650 new applications for assistance and distributed £1.4million across 2,200 cases of need.

The CD is available from the Shipwrecked Mariners' Society for £5 plus £1 P&P and can be ordered via its website <http://www.shipwreckedmariners.org.uk/Home/MediaCentre.aspx>

Follow the society on www.facebook.com/shipwreckedmariners or follow on Twitter @ShipwreckedSoc.

To find out more about Stamp and Go visit <http://www.stamp-and-go.co.uk/>

Cups of cheer at Culdrose

SSAFA (Formally known as Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association) were out beating the winter weather with a "Beat the Blues Brew up" at RNAS Culdrose.

The occasion also gave SSAFA a chance to introduce their new chairperson, Carol Orchard, wife of the newly-appointed Commanding Officer of RNAS Culdrose, and re-launch their crucial work in the service community.

"We normally have a Big Brew-up later in the year, where everyone comes along to support us, but a Beat the Blues Big Brew now is just what we need," said Liz Tripp, SSAFA's West Country Support Manager.

"We're the oldest military charity and a lot of people haven't heard of us, so getting the word out and about is really important. One day's service means a lifetime of support to us."

The Culdrose SSAFA group was established in September 2013, and are keen to tell people about the support families and Service personnel can get from the organisation.

They also provide trained community workers who work alongside Royal Navy Royal Marines Welfare giving practical and emotional support to anyone who has a need.

"SSAFA is an amazing family Association that gives plenty of support when military personnel are deployed", said Carol Orchard. "We just need to let people know what's out there, how to access it and then get our people to use it."

Fundraisers carry dummy on stretcher for day

FUNDRAISERS at RNAS Culdrose had to endure some of the worst weather of the winter so far this year in a charity stretcher-carry event that lasted 24 hours.

Groups of Service and civilian personnel who work at the base began their marathon 24-hour challenge, which would involve carrying a stretcher around RNAS Culdrose

non-stop in relays of between seven or eight people in one-hour shifts.

To add to their burden a realistic dummy called 'Fred' was added which represented a man of approximately 14 stone at the start of the day. They visited all the squadrons and work areas at Culdrose in the course of the day.

"The weather throughout the event was horrendous," said Lt Mark Jones, Culdrose Base support logistics officer. "We had to contend with freezing temperatures, strong winds, horizontal rain and hail, which got even worse as the night went on."

"We aim to make about £3,000 for the Make-a-Wish UK charity."



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LIBOR of love for NFF with £3m for RN good causes

THE NFF thanked George Osborne for donating £3m to Royal Navy causes from the LIBOR fund – fines for banks for colluding to fix exchange rates – when the chancellor visited Castaway House in Portsmouth.

He was greeted by NFF chairwoman Kim Richardson as he announced the handout, which is being divided into three equal parts:

- £1m for the RNRMC to support Royal Navy personnel and their families in the Portsmouth area with a series of projects, including refurbishing the warrant officers' mess at Sultan and converting the old *Navy News* offices at Nelson into flats ('Navy Mews') for families to spend time with their loved ones if they are deploying;
- £1m for the RNRMC to support a number of projects, including the Naval Families Federation
- £1m for the National Museum of the Royal Navy and the Royal Navy Historic Flight to help restore WW2 landing craft LCT 7074 (see page 19)



and to fund essential long-term repairs to the veteran Swordfish torpedo bombers maintained at Yeovilton.

"It was really nice to be able to thank the Chancellor in person for recognising the great work that Naval Service families do in support of the Naval Service," said Kim.

"This extra funding is seriously good news for our families. LIBOR has enabled our smaller charities to do some really big work in support of families; without this funding it simply would not have been possible."

Contact NFF

■ 023 9265 4374/admin@nff.org.uk/Castaway House, 311 Twyford Avenue, Portsmouth, PO2 8RN.
Or visit www.nff.org.uk for news, our free, quarterly Homeport magazine and monthly e-update.



A Gateway to a better way of working

SAILORS and Royal Marines – Regular and Reserve – can now access their JPA statement of earnings from anywhere in the world via any https compatible device.

Following a successful trial by Maritime Reserve personnel, Navy Command Headquarters is now promoting wider use of the Defence Gateway to improve access to information and adopt modern working and learning practices.

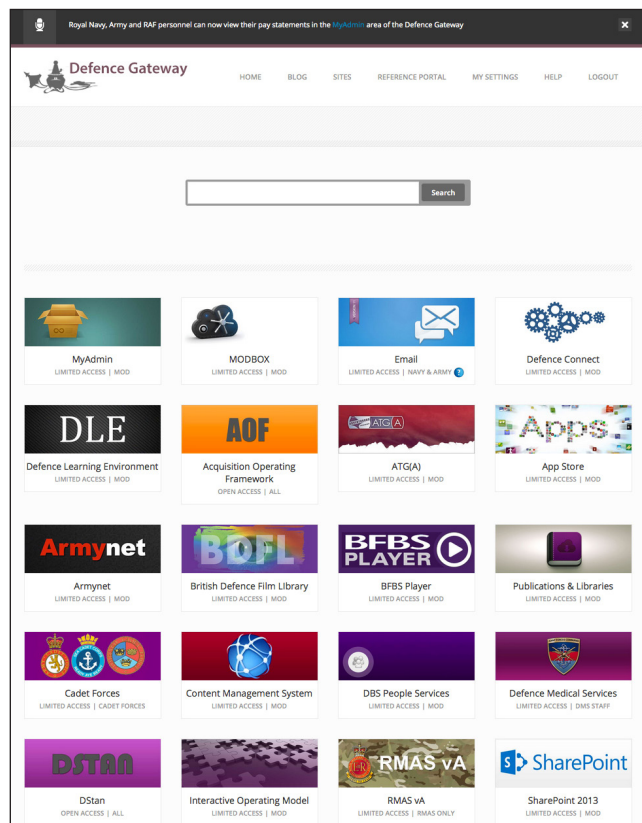
Gateway services have been available for some time now, but the knowledge and experience necessary to exploit this capability in the business space has only recently been developed.

For the past six months, several hundred members of the Reserve, and a number of other smaller communities including FOST, have been using the gateway to conduct business and shape modern ways of working and also learning. The headquarters has learned a great deal from the trial and is now ready to see the user base widen.

The Defence Gateway is accessible via the Internet and can therefore be accessed from anywhere in the world. In addition, the service is compatible with smart devices – so it will scale according to screen size and browser capability, providing the widest possible utility.

Following on from the trial and the recent announcement from the Chief Information Officer regarding MODBOX (an OFFICIAL and OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE DropBox) and Defence Connect (a Defence Social Collaboration tool), which are both Defence Gateway applications, the Naval Service is pleased to announce other features available to all users including OFFICIAL email (with an @royalnavymail.mod.uk email address) and for uniformed personnel, key data from your payslip from JPA.

From June 2015, the Defence Learning Environment, which



● A screen grab of the home page of the new Defence Gateway once you've successfully logged in

will host all eLearning following the demise of the Defence Learning Portal, will also only be accessible via the Gateway. More to come on this in the next few months.

Examples of use include access to reference information anywhere at anytime, sharing of information and ideas generally or within business and social communities and email for the traditional one to one/few for information sharing.

There is more functionality in the pipeline such as a mobile App store, Sharepoint services and a content management system which will host all OFFICIAL

DINs, Galaxy notes and JSPs for example. The hosting arrangement is fully scalable, accredited and assured.

More information can be found in RNTM (No 44-15), the Galaxy Note and on the Defence Intranet, or of course you could jump straight in – all uniformed personnel automatically have an account created and enabling this is simply a case of registering for your account on the website at www.defencegateway.mod.uk. If things don't go well, there is an online helpdesk 'ticket' system that is manned during normal business hours.

So what are you waiting for?

Sultan's AETs trial tablets

OF THE app rather than pop in your mouth variety...

Thirty tablets are being used by trainee AETs at the Gosport home of air engineering and survival equipment training as part of the move towards a 'virtual learning environment' which will allow technicians to access all course material from anywhere in the world at any time.

Lessons will be delivered by 'trailblazer' instructors using Smartboard technology to provide course material on four adapted modules, there will be interaction with trainees via blogs and forums, and course material will remain available to personnel upon completion of their courses – ensuring that individual users can be kept up-to-date with the latest training developments throughout their careers.

As for the tablet trial, it's aimed initially at Phase 3 trainees whose experiences of earlier methods of training will prove invaluable in measuring effectiveness before the trial moves on to Phase 2 training.

If trials are successful, the plan will be to supply each student with a tablet when they join their course; it will be their property until they complete the course – with no paper course notes.

The tablets will also provide trainees living away from home with a convenient method of communicating with their families in their private time.

Cdr Jim McNair, in charge of the Royal Naval Air Engineering and Survival Equipment School, said: "While the school is evolving with the new technology, what remains at the core of how and what we teach is the relationship between the instructor and the student."

"The school has always been a place where learning needs to be of the highest quality and that has, and always will be, down to the professionalism and spirit of the team in the school."

All change at changing rooms

CHINA Fleet Country Club in Saltash has just completed a full refurbishment of its men's, ladies and disabled changing room facilities at the cost of £200,000.

Changes include new lockers with pin code entry, extra showers and vanity screens.

A grant of £100,000 from the RNRMC – the largest ever given by the charity – has helped with the cost of the revamp.

All serving sailors and Royal Marines – and their immediate families – are automatically members of the club and entitled to use its facilities on a subsidised 'pay as you play'

Fancy the flagships?



Would you like the opportunity to serve in HMS Queen Elizabeth of Prince of Wales? Volunteers to form the first crews for both ships are actively being sought, particularly among the senior rating cadre. If interested, contact your career manager to discuss the opportunities.



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One big ETICC in the box

Perfect for the iPrayer

THROWING their caps in the air in celebration are the first of a new breed of marine engineers to pass out at HMS Sultan.

These are the successful candidates of the new ETICC – Engineering Technician Initial Career Course – 11 weeks longer than its predecessor and much more hands-on.

The seven months of instruction at the home of RN marine engineering in Gosport is part of a shake-up of the way the RN's ETs are trained and supported.

The additional training in the extended new basic course gives budding technicians the chance to tinker with engines installed in ships across the Fleet from minehunters to Type 45 destroyers.

"I was fascinated as soon as I joined the course," said ET(ME) Lucy Fears, one of the successful students.

"My brother had gone through the old course and he was really interested to hear about all the practical work we have been doing.

Lucy continued: "I've really enjoyed it; my favourite part were the workshop sessions where we got to design and make something and see the final result.

"I am very proud to be passing out today and am ridiculously excited about getting onto a ship and using all the skills I have learnt."

The course takes sailors after their basic ten-week 'civvy to sailor' training at HMS Raleigh and gives them an intensive 30-week training package.

"Each one of the changes that were made to the course will not only benefit our young technicians but will also ripple out with them as they join their



first ships," said Capt Trevor Gully, Sultan's CO.

"Each one of our marine engineers should be very proud of their achievements in passing out today."

As well as Lucy and her fellow 22 ETs passing out, an additional 11 engineers on a fast-track programme – designed to quickly promote those with exceptional talents up through the ranks – qualified as LETs.

Those on the course get the chance to train on simulators which precisely replicate engine compartments and operations rooms – ensuring they are ready to hit the ground running when they become part of the ship's company.

Picture: LA(Phot) Dave Jenkins

Faraday

TO COINCIDE with ETICC 14/02 passing out of Sultan in February, the interim Career Development Journal (CDJ) was issued to the class and also passed on to the ETICC 14/01 class already out in the Fleet.

The CDJ has been developed to allow competence-based learning to be captured and recorded in the workplace throughout an engineer's career. This is a mindset change with the emphasis being placed on practical, hands-on development, mentored and reviewed by onboard SMEs whilst at sea.

The first stage of developing

the 'e-CDJ' is complete and the user requirements will be used as the foundation for the development of the actual product. The vision is an engineer's 'e-career' development journal, accessible on both the inter and intranet, hosted in the Defence Learning Environment (DLE), as part of the Defence Gateway environment (DGW). If you have not come across the DLE or DGW before, RNTM 146/14 contains an overview of the future online education space and how it will look.

As the end of March approaches, preparations for the CIS/WE Vesting Day are well in hand. The revised ET(WE)(CIS) badges are in the process of being manufactured, with the intention

of despatching them to the Fleet in time for you to be wearing them on April 1. Keep an eye on the post.

In the Support Improvement Programme PORFLOT Capt E has announced the establishment of the Engineering Support Teams and the provision of 'walk-in workshops' in the D Lock complex. All Portsmouth-based ships are encouraged to use these facilities. Details are also being finalised to allow RN access to dockyard retail stores in Portsmouth and Devonport. Updates will follow in due course.

The expansion of the Sonar 2087 Deep Technical Specialist (DTS) trial has resulted in two more POET(WE)s joining Thales in January to qualify as Sonar DTS. There has also been agreement to assign maintainers to commence Phalanx DTS training with Babcock next month and in September. Plans continue to be made to expand the number of DTS, particularly in marine engineering equipment/systems where possible.

Finally, we'd like to wish a fond farewell to WO1 Sharky Ward as he heads back to the West Country in preparation for a life after the Service.

Sharky has been the main voice of the Faraday programme and central to a lot of the changes which will benefit the Service in the coming years. He has worked tirelessly to implement these new initiatives. We wish him well.

The Faraday and SIP Team will continue to inform you about what's happening. If you have any questions or comments on the programme and/or the Support Improvement Programme then contact me, WO1 Robbie Robson, on 93832 7441 or via e-mail navy_eng_spt-hum_cap_w01a. The Faraday intranet site can be found via the A-Z.

The lean, green career machine

KINGS Squad Pass Outs provide the Royal Marines general service with its 'Gains to Trained Strength' of more than 500 new general duties marines per annum.

It is important to ensure that new Royal Marines are provided with the right opportunity to 'cut their teeth' in general duty roles. To achieve this, they are assigned positions in the three 'combat' Commando units – 40, 42 and 45 – and the 'specialist to role' 43 Commando and are guaranteed 12 months in that first post.

Subsequently, the majority of general duty Royal Marines in Commando units will specialise either as a volunteer or via the Direct Specialisation Scheme – vacating positions to be filled by new arrivals from Kings Squad.

Those who remain general duty through choice will go to a second tour general duty post – most of these assignments are with 43 Cdo FPGRM, the Commando Logistics Regiment and 30 Cdo Information Exploitation Group.

In all cases, NPT(RM) will examine the best career management of the individual considering the needs of the Service/unit/individual.

In sum, units and individuals (both general duty and

Specialisation transfers in 2014	
Approved	121
Not approved.....	45
Deferred	1
Cancelled	5
Total.....	172

specialisation qualified personnel) should be expected a new assignment at their future availability date (as detailed on their assignment order), and discuss with NPT(RM) and specialisation advisors in good time. Early engagement will assist in securing the best opportunity of getting a subsequent assignment of choice.

Specialisation Transfer Boards
NPT(RM) hold specialisation transfer boards every month to help Royal Marines to follow their preferred career path. The rank needs to enter his request on JPA and then notify his chain of command. This information is then sent to NPT(RM) via the rank's sergeant major or the assistant adjutant.

Once received by NPT(RM) the individual's JPA is checked and his specialisation advisor is informed along with the manning warrant officer and the requirements warrant officer. All aspects of the career change are

Drafty's corner



investigated. Current waiting lists, training requirements and eligibility are all checked before the results are produced and sent to the units.

Impartial Career Advice

NPT(RM) employ three career advisors who provide impartial careers advice to any rank or SQ. Personnel are advised to make use of their knowledge and expertise and call if they need careers advice, whether in regard to information in this brief or any other career related matters.

Their details are: WO1 Nicholas (NPT(RM)) 93832 5531 or 02392 625531; WO2 Moxham (CTCRM) 93785 4542 or 01392 414542; and WO2 Stubbings (CTCRM) 93785 4222 or 01392 414222.



Get Hans-on in the Alps

THE winter programme at the Naval Outdoor Centre Germany is still in full swing with 50 students taking part in Ski Foundation 1 (beginner alpine training), Ski Foundation 2 (alpine and ski touring) or Ski Foundation 3 (ski touring with greater emphasis on winter skills and avalanche avoidance).

The weekly feedback from the students is both listened to and responded to by staff – and overall it is extremely positive.

"I have had a fabulous AT experience and would recommend visiting NOCG to everyone," said Wtr Grant Black (HMS Nelson).

The new hotel facilities at Alpinelandhotel Hirsch in Bad Hindelang (a couple of hours' drive from Munich) are far superior to what was previously available.

Non-public money from the RN and RM continues to help with the added extras and is very much appreciated.

The winter programme remains over subscribed and best efforts are made by the CO to make sure frontline people are looked after first whenever possible.

AT-qualified instructors remain in high demand – if you are able to offer your time to help instruct, you'll be made very welcome as part of the team.

Please note: you are more likely to be able to bring your people out if you can provide an instructor.

Lt Cdr Joe Wood has now handed over to Lt Col Martin Price and the message is: book early as the summer programme (kayaking, canoeing, Klettersteig, mountain biking, climbing, mountain trekking) – like the winter programme – remains very popular.

See www.nocg.co.uk for details about free AT for Naval Service personnel.

Women in the RN are awesome

AN ORGANISATION designed for women serving in the RN has been officially recognised as an 'Awesome Network'.

Inclusive networks is an organisation which acts as a hub for celebrating diversity and inclusion – and aims to celebrate the positive impact of network groups of all types.

Under the first list of its kind the Naval Servicewomen's Network (NSN) was one of 40 networks picked out for its contribution to the people it represents, joining firms, groups and organisations such as Amnesty, Glasgow University, John Lewis/Waitrose, Nationwide and the BBC.

The NSN is a professional network for women in the RN, established to improve retention, encourage and enable individuals to achieve their potential and provide an opportunity to gather feedback to make a positive contribution to shape future personnel policy. Membership is open to all women – officers and ratings – across the Service: RN, RNR, RM Band, and RFA.

"We benefit from a small but dedicated team of volunteers, the strong support of our senior leaders and the innovative use of resources and opportunities to share, inspire and empower women and men in the Naval Service," said Capt Ellie Ablett, NSN chairwoman.

"We also believe that networks promote much more than their members' interests and we are always looking at ways of supporting other diversity networks and positive national campaigns to flourish."



● Standards are paraded from the Church of St John the Baptist in Aldenham

Aldenham victims are honoured

COMMEMORATIONS have taken place to mark the 70th anniversary of the sinking of HMS Aldenham – the last Royal Navy destroyer lost in World War 2.

Every year, on the Sunday nearest to December 14, a memorial service is held in the Aldenham village church of St John the Baptist, attended by both serving and veteran Naval personnel.

As 2014 marked the 70th anniversary of the sinking, and was likely to be one of the last times that many of the survivors would be able to attend, a strong Royal Navy presence honoured those who lost their lives.

The CO of HMS Wildfire, Cdr Stephanie Shinner, said: "This was a particularly special occasion for me, having grown up attending St John the Baptist Church, Aldenham, where my mother still worships and sings in the choir and where I married my husband, Patrick, 30 years ago this month after we met on joining the Royal Naval Reserve."

"It was therefore a great pleasure to take part, but especially to do so standing alongside both veterans and the young men and women serving today."

The Naval Service was also represented by four other Naval units, including the Maritime Warfare School and Victory Squadron at HMS Collingwood, the London University Royal Naval Unit (LURNU) and Royal Marines Band, Portsmouth.

HMS Aldenham, one of 86 World War 2 Hunt-class destroyers, was struck by a mine whilst on service in the Adriatic on December 14, 1944 – 126 men lost their lives, with 63 rescued, and HMS Aldenham lies on the seabed where she sank and is a war grave.

LA Matthew Ready, based at HMS Collingwood, said: "It is an honour and a privilege to be involved in this poignant 70th anniversary commemoration service, remembering those that so bravely gave their all for us."

OC David Cochrane, who attends Imperial College London and is a member of the LURNU, said: "Honouring those who made the supreme sacrifice reminds us to be humble for what we have in the present."

Veterans nurture future commandos

EACH Royal Marines recruit troop that arrives at Commando Training Centre has mentors from the Royal Marines Association (RMA) who provide a father figure to the recruits and gives them a living connection to the Corps history.

So as the Corps' 350th anniversary celebrations drew to a close, three RMA recruit mentors were interviewed in the Sergeants' Mess at Lympstone, where they gather regularly to share their experiences old and new.

90-year-old Cpl Bill Bryant joined the Corps in 1943 and served as a landing craft coxswain on D-Day, landing equipment at Gold Beach (Arromanches) in Normandy.

In World War 2 the Royal Marines grew to be nearly 80,000 strong, and its personnel manned landing craft and the heavy guns on warships as well as providing commando units and regular Royal Marines infantry.

"When I joined up the pay was 14 shillings a fortnight," said Bill, who was born in London.

On June 4 1944 Bill set off across the English Channel for the invasion of France but had to come back as D-Day was postponed for 24 hours.

"We went back into Pompey and were taken to a cinema to wait," recalled Bill. "The film was *Arsenic and Old Lace*..."

After D-Day Bill spent six weeks in Normandy, during which time the giant Mulberry harbours were constructed.

His landing craft then made its way back across the Channel – it had a damaged engine and was moving so slowly it fell behind its escort, but finally made its way to HMS Hornet on the Isle of Wight, after which he returned to his base at HMS Cricket on the Hamble River in Hampshire.

After the war he spent two years away with 45 Cdo in Egypt, Palestine, Jordan and Hong Kong, finally returning to Deal Barracks in 1950.

"The first thing I was told was get that green beret off – you're back in a Royal Marines barracks now. Get a blue beret on!" laughed Bill.

After leaving the Corps in 1952 Bill was a postman for 35 years.

Bill still routinely takes part in RMA parades – on May 31 last year he marched with his RMA comrades through Exmouth prior to the entire Lympstone base speed-marching through the town as part of the 1664 Challenge.

During the parade he collapsed and had to be taken to Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital.

"You can't fault the recruits,"



● From left, RMA mentors Bill Bryant, Trevor Bartlett and Chris Lambert

Pictures: LA(Phot) Dean Nixon



● 184 Troop mentors pose with their recruits after the Tarzan assault course commando test

Picture: WO2 Richard White

said Bill. "They treat us with absolute respect."

"As soon as we go into the chapel café room for a tea or coffee someone will come over and say 'Do you want a wet Royal?'"

His 86-year-old comrade Cpl Noel (Chris) Lambert was a cadet in 1945.

He started training at Deal Barracks for 12 weeks before moving to the Infantry Training Centre at Lympstone for another 12 weeks.

He then did ten weeks Commando School at Bickleigh Barracks near Plymouth, on the edge of Dartmoor.

He deployed operationally to Haifa in Palestine with Bill before they both sailed to the Far East on the Cunard liner MV Georgic, where he was involved in the Malayan Emergency.

"It's great being a mentor for the recruits," said Chris. "It's the only thing that's kept me alive!"

"To tell you the truth, I'm still learning off the recruits now and it's keeping me going."

"All the time I'm watching them I'm learning something."

"In our day it was rough and ready. It was National Service."

"My father was Royal Marines Light Infantry and served on

HMS Furious which was the first battlecruiser to be converted to an aircraft carrier, and my grandfather was Royal Marines Artillery."

The youngster of the three is 78-year-old Cpl Trevor Bartlett, who was a signaller by trade.

Trev easily reels off the multiple recruit troops he's mentored: "The first one was 963 (joined March 10 2008), then 984, 101, 118, 149, 165, 180, and I'm now with 196 Troop."

"I served in the Aden Conflict. When we were in Aden we didn't actually know what was happening."

"We were working in the Radfan on the Dhala road. It was the bowels of the earth."

"I think the recruits now are far superior than our guys when they pass out."

"We had lads who couldn't read and write," said Trev, who served in the Corps between 1957 and 1968.

Both Bill and Chris are mentors for recruits in the rehabilitation Hunter Company.

During their training the recruits are taken on a battlefield tour of the Normandy, they are often accompanied by Bill, who can describe what he saw with his

own eyes.

"It's a fatherly figure. It's about maintaining the Corps family," said Lt Col Chris Ordway, Commanding Officer of Commando Training Wing.

"We bring the recruits' parents in on Families' Days and on the King's Squad Pass-out and we reinforce the importance of them to be part of the Corps family."

"It's the same for the mentors – they are our history, and they are helping to grow our future."

"There's also a degree of them holding us to account I suppose, ensuring that we can show to the wider Royal Marines Association community that standards have not changed at all."

"In fact, recruits today are more professional than they've ever been."

"They are well-educated when they come here, and the requirements of the modern battlefield mean that they have to learn a lot more."

"The mentors are also someone for the recruits to talk to who is not in their chain of command."

"Also it's enabling the recruits to touch our history. The experience the mentors have, especially the operational experience, is amazing."

"It helps the mentors too – they're staying in touch and they're feeling more involved with the Corps' future."

The mentors have memories of CTCRM as it was 70 years ago.

"It was very different if our time," said Chris.

"Everyone works together much better now. We used to have to stand to attention if a corporal walked past."

"We had to ask permission to go ashore even if you were a trained rank – and you then had to go out in full blues."

"We're like *Last of the Summer Wine*, us three."

Although none of the trio could agree on who is Compo...

New man at top for Pershore

MEMBERS of Pershore and District branch have elected a new chairman.

S/M Terry Brimmell was appointed by a unanimous vote at the branch's AGM to follow in the footsteps of S/M Ted Annis, who died on November 10 last year.

Ted had set up the branch with an inaugural meeting in September 2002, where he was first elected chairman, and he held this position right up until his death, being elected each year with no opposition.

Terry attended that inaugural meeting and had worked alongside S/M Ted for 12 years in the capacity of treasurer.

Speaking after the elections, Terry, who served nine years in Mob, said: "Following on in Ted's footsteps is very daunting because it is a mammoth task, for which I will rely on the support of my fellow shipmates."

"As a legacy to Ted we must carry on with the sterling work that he did to the best of our ability."

"I am deeply honoured to have been chosen and will endeavour to work hard to ensure that the Branch keeps running from strength to strength."

Donations in Ted's memory raised £848, which has been sent to the local branch of SSAFA.

Ted's widow Margaret went on to raise a further £300 in December for the Vale of Evesham School with her Christmas raffle at the Naval Club.

Conference plans laid

PLANNING for both this year's and next year's National Conferences is gathering pace – with the possibility of a sporting dimension to the 2016 gathering.

General Secretary S/M Paul Quinn visited the Grand Burstin Hotel in Folkestone at the start of this year, meeting with 2 Area, the National Ceremonial Advisor and the Association's sound engineer, Lyndon Ford.

While the hotel itself should, in Capt Quinn's opinion, provide an ideal venue for the Conference, there is no nearby church.

Association officials are therefore planning to hold a drumhead service by the sea on the Sunday, with the white cliffs of Dover as the backdrop.

This will provide the opportunity for a short march and a parade of standards.

Capt Quinn has also visited Wokefield Park, near Mortimer in Berkshire, venue for the 2016 Conference – "a very nice hotel at an amazing price (thanks CONA Travel service)," said Capt Quinn.

The hotel has a gym and pool and a Grade 1 listed building, and is surrounded by a full PGA 18-hole golf course.

Capt Quinn is considering holding the first RNA Open on the Sunday afternoon, but he needs to gauge potential interest in such an event.

No minimum handicap would be required, and the cost for a round on the open parkland course would be around £25 to £35 depending on numbers.

RNA HQ, Room 209, Semaphore Tower (PP70), HM Naval Base, Portsmouth PO1 3LT.

admin@royalnavalassoc.com

023 9272 3747

www.royal-naval-association.co.uk



Shipmates support Sea Cadets

AT the invitation of Brentwood Sea Cadets, members of Brentwood branch attended the Cadets' prizegiving at their headquarters, TS St Vincent.

Guest of honour was Cdre Jonathon Fry, former Captain Sea Cadets and now responsible for the Cadet forces of all three Services.

After the guests were piped aboard, Colours and the inspection of the divisions, there was a long list of prizewinners for various activities, including sailing, success on BTech engineering courses and Duke of Edinburgh awards.

Multi-prizewinner Bosun AC Farmer, who has been promoted to Leading Cadet, was also voted cadet of the year.

After a speech by Cdre Fry, the evening ended with Colours and the Commodore piped off the deck.

Welfare on the agenda

A WELFARE Seminar is to be held in the WO & SR Mess at HMS Nelson on Saturday March 28.

Although primarily aimed at area and branch welfare officers, observers and shipmates with an interest in the welfare aspects of a branch are encouraged to attend.

Starting at 10am, a number of speakers will be briefing on a wide range of welfare-related issues; organisations which have accepted an invitation include Combat Stress, Age UK Benefits, Veterans with Dogs, Hosanna House, T4V, Veterans UK and SSAFA.

For more details and an application form see the February Circular.

£50 PRIZE PUZZLE



THE mystery ship in our January edition (right) was cruiser HMS Birmingham, which rammed and sank submarine U-15 on August 9, 1914.

The winning answers were provided by Mr B Hill, of Dundee, who takes the £50 prize.

This month's ship (above), a light cruiser launched in Barrow-in-Furness in 1934, had an active and prominent part to play in World War 2, with notable success in the South Atlantic, the Med and the Channel – despite spending almost two years in refit then having bomb damage repaired.

She survived the war – the picture above was taken in Malta's Grand Harbour in 1946 – and arrived for breaking up in South Wales in late 1949.

1) What was her name, and 2) in which country was a town named in her honour during World War 2 after one of her successful engagements with the enemy?

We have removed her name

Arboretum wins praise

A NEW survey shows high levels of appreciation and loyalty among visitors to the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire.

The Arboretum, part of the Royal British Legion family of charities, welcomes around 300,000 people to its national centre for remembrance every year.

Results show that 97 per cent of the 298 respondents to the survey, which was conducted face-to-face and online, said that they were 'very likely' to recommend it to their friends.

Over two-thirds (69 per cent) also went on to say that they were 'very likely' to return within the next year.

The Armed Forces Memorial, which commemorates those who have been killed on duty or as a result of terrorism from the end of World War 2 to the present day, was rated 'very good or good' by 100 per cent of visitors.

Facilities such as the children's play area and gift shop were also very highly rated.

While 50 per cent of the

survey's respondents have either served in the Armed Forces or were the spouse, sibling or parent of someone who has served in the last 50 years, 82 per cent observed correctly that the Arboretum was not purely a military site.

More than nine out of ten visitors said they were 'very satisfied' with the helpfulness of staff and volunteers at the Arboretum, which expects to see its visitor numbers increase to 450,000 per year following major redevelopment work, which is due to begin later this year.

Sarah Montgomery, managing director of the Arboretum, said: "We were hugely heartened by the results of this survey, which shows that the hard work of our staff and volunteers is so clearly valued and appreciated."

"With hundreds of thousands of visitors passing through our gates each year, and many planning a return visit, there is a clear desire to remember those that have served, suffered and sacrificed."

"The coming year heralds some exciting further improvements to

the Arboretum, not least in terms of up to 20 new memorials being dedicated.

"Buoyed by this impressive feedback, the team here is devoted to preserving and enhancing the centre for future generations."

The Arboretum has 50 staff and over 250 volunteers, and contributes more than £25m per annum to the Midlands' regional economy.

The charity has an annual

turnover of just under £3m, of which 70 per cent is generated from catering, retail, fundraising and car-parking income.

A further 21 per cent is provided by the Royal British Legion, while just nine per cent comes from public funds.

The Naval Service Memorial, an RNA project marking the 60th anniversary of the Association's Royal Charter and unveiled last summer, is one of the largest and most striking memorials in

the grounds, with 13 glass panels representing the five oceans of the world.

The 150-acre site was developed from a former gravel works near Alrewas, gifted by Lafarge.

Planting began in 1997, and now more than 50,000 trees form a peaceful backdrop to more than 300 memorials, both military and civilian, including dozens dedicated to elements of the Naval Service.

www.thenma.org.uk

Bulwark is remembered

THREE commemorative ceremonies were held in Kent at the end of last year to mark the centenary of the loss of HMS Bulwark on the Medway.

Members of HMS Bulwark Albion & Centaur Association and descendants of the dead held a poignant service, laying wreaths above the wreck at Kethole Reach, to the west of Sheerness.

Later, another memorial service was held in Woodlands Cemetery in Gillingham, which was preceded by a parade and march to the mass grave where some of the crew were buried – almost 750 men died in the accidental explosion.

The presence of Royal Marines musicians was particularly apt, as 15 members of the HMS Excellent Band were among those who died in the accident, thought to have been caused when a cordite charge overheated and sparked the explosion.

A commemoration dinner was held in the King Charles Hotel,



● S/M Bernie Keane, standard bearer for the HMS Bulwark, Albion & Centaur Association, afloat on the Medway during a ceremony to mark the centenary of the loss of HMS Bulwark

Chatham, when a Corps of Drums from the Royal Marines Band entertained the guests, including Lt James Hodgkiss

from the current HMS Bulwark.

On the following morning a church service was held in the St George's Centre, Chatham.

Newark hope to fund medical kit

AT Newark's Remembrance Day parade on November 9 last year S/M Peter Wilderspin, Newark branch chairman and No 9 Area president, collapsed with a heart attack.

Only the quick reactions of off-watch retained firefighter Dennis Rhule, who performed CPR, and Kevin Walsh, from Newark Community First Aid, who administered two shocks from a defibrillator, brought Peter back.

They were supported by other members of Newark Community First Aid and members of White Watch from Newark Fire Station.

Peter was taken to Lincoln Hospital, then to Glenfield Hospital, a specialist cardiac hospital in Leicester.

A team of surgeons fitted a new valve in Peter's aorta, but it was not until January that he was allowed to come home to his wife Bev.

As soon as he was feeling better the branch wanted to arrange a presentation to those who helped save his life.

After being told of the events RNA HQ provided certificates of honorary membership of the RNA for Dennis and Kevin and certificates of appreciation for White Watch and Newark Community First Aid.

These were presented along with a Newark RNA crest and a cheque for £200 each for Newark Community First Aid and the Fire Fighters Charity.

One thing the events of November highlighted was that access to mobile defibrillators helped save Peter's life – there were three readily available on the day. Talk about right place at the right time...

In conjunction with Newark Community First Aid the branch hopes to raise funds to provide a defibrillator for the community, possibly in a disused phone box in Newark Market Place.

Once there are more details shipmates hope they can gain the support of other ex-Forces associations in the town.

Charity boost

SHIPMATES raised more than £15,000 for the Royal Navy Royal Marines Charity in 2014, having nominated the RNRMC as its charity of the year.

This was most recently topped up by RNA Folkestone, who sent in an impressive £1,500 in January.

A total of 19 branches have been involved in raising money through various events, sending in 22 donations throughout the year.

If you would like a collection box to keep in your branch, email Hilary, Dean or Dominika at fundraising@rnrmc.org.uk with your contact details, or call 023 9254 8289.




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*Source: Trustpilot 22nd January 2015



● Lt Cdr Andrew Norgate

Helping to raise morale

A ROYAL Navy officer who successfully completed an advanced surveying course has been rewarded for his excellence in team-building with his fellow students.

Lt Cdr Andrew Norgate, from Plymouth, has been presented with the Navy's prestigious 'David Croft Bowl' for his morale-boosting contribution to the group's success during their advanced course in hydrographic and meteorological surveying at HMNB Devonport, Plymouth.

The award was created by the family of Lt David Croft who died in a motoring accident in 2006.

Lt Cdr Norgate said: "It was a really good team to work with. It's hard to quantify the individual effort in a group course, the Royal Navy itself is a team and we rise and fall together."

"I am very happy I could help bring the group together and raise morale throughout this tough course."

Andrew, who has been in the Royal Navy for 16 years, now plans to move to Japan with his wife, Helen and two children, Yuna, seven and Adam, five, where he will complete an advanced staff course.

Sea to the air

NINE submariners from HMS Vanguard (Port) reached for the skies when they took part in some adventurous training.

The submariners enrolled in the basic parachuting course run by the Joint Services Parachute Centre in Netheravon, Wiltshire.

The nine were well used to spending months beneath the waves subject to atmospheric pressure. However, the parachute course let them experience pressure of a different kind – that associated with performing basic tasks while jumping out of an aircraft.

Lt Alan Morrison, the submariners' team leader, said: "It was a great opportunity for some of the ship's company to try a new sport and to conquer any fears they may have had."

Piping hot

THE Royal Navy warship HMS Sutherland marked Burns Night in style.

To celebrate the event, celebrating the life and works of the Scottish poet Robert Burns, HMS Sutherland, 'Scotland's' fighting frigate, hosted a Scottish-themed meal for its ship's company.

Chef Tom Pedley said: "We cooked up popular Scottish dishes such as haggis, neeps and tatties and Dundee cake to tie in with the occasion, much to the delight of the Scottish ratings on board."



● The oil painting Turpin and Maidstone has been bequeathed to the Royal Navy Submarine Museum

Bequest in memory of submariner

A PAINTING has been bequeathed to Gosport's Royal Navy Submarine Museum to mark the role of the Super Ts submarine class in the post-war period.

The oil painting of HMS Turpin with Maidstone by Paul Wright was presented to Capt Dan Conley, Chairman of Trustees of Royal Navy Submarine Museum by the son

and daughter of the late submariner Lt Cdr 'Alfie' Roake.

Lt Cdr Roake was born in 1925 and enjoyed a long and illustrious record in the Submarine Service. He died in 2005.

He began his training, post-war, in 1948 at HMS Dolphin. In 1958 he took command of HMS Turpin, one of several wartime T-class

submarines which were extensively modified in order to equip them for the new covert roles that were developing in the Cold War period.

Alfie's role in the Service was featured in the book *Hunter Killers: The Dramatic Untold Story of the Royal Navy's Most Secret Service* by Iain Ballantyne.

Pupils make music with RM bandies

NINE pupils from Mill Ford School in Plymouth have been treated to a special performance by the Band of Her Majesty's Royal Marines.

The group were invited to the Band's headquarters at HMS Raleigh, where they were treated to a concert performance and a marching display.

The students were invited to take a turn with the Corps of Drums and also joined in with the march.

The visit was organised as part of the 15 and 16-year-olds studies into the City of Plymouth and its culture.

Teacher Helga Pinn, the subject lead at Mill Ford, said: "The Royal Marines Band is one of the highlights of the culture and the city. I'm delighted that we have been able to visit; it has been such a fabulous experience for the pupils of Mill Ford."

"As a school for children and young adults with severe and profound learning difficulties, it

is sometimes more difficult for us to access things available to main stream schools."

Plans are being made for the Band to visit Mill Ford in the future.

Maj Jason Burcham, Director of Music of the Plymouth Band, said: "It was a real pleasure to be able to host Australia Class from Mill Ford School."

"Their reaction to the music was infectious; they were clearly enthused by our performance and were all keen to join in with the Corps of Drums and the Marching Band."

"It was a great opportunity for our musicians and buglers to interact with young people with learning difficulties via the positive effects of music."

"For a time we had nine additional members of the Band and, having established this rewarding relationship with Mill Ford School, it is something that we want to continue for many years."



● Honorary Bugler Craig Andrews, left, and Bugler James Horner beat the military drum
Picture: Dave Sherfield

Kersey engineers success yet again

A PROMISING young Ministry of Defence apprentice from Plymouth has scooped a national award and has become the first to have won twice in a row.

Kersey Segger, 21, an apprentice from Devonport Naval Base is the winner of the Tom Nevard Memorial Competition 2014 award, sponsored by the Institute of Mechanical Engineers.

Kersey was presented with the award by the Duke of York at a ceremony held at the MOD in London.

Kersey is a third-year Devonport apprentice, who is currently working at MOD Abbey Wood for the Defence Equipment and Support (DE&S) organisation in the strategic weapons support design authority.

The competition involved the design

and manufacture of a steam engine, using hand skills only within a 21-hour time period spread across five days.

Kersey said: "It was really good fun. The challenge itself was exciting, and so was working amongst nine like-minded apprentices, who were all inspired and motivated to complete the work. It was about learning new skills, making friends, discussing methods and our mutual interests."

Kersey is aiming to start a degree in engineering after completing her apprenticeship.

The Ministry of Defence Advanced Engineering Management Apprenticeship is now recruiting for a September 2015 start. Full details on the scheme can be found on www.gov.uk/mod/des-advanced-apprenticeship.



● Kersey Segger has won a top award again



● Capt Adrian Orchard

Hectic time for new CO

CAPT Adrian Orchard has joined RNAS Cudrose as its new Commanding Officer.

With aircraft and personnel currently deployed across the globe and the latest version of the Merlin helicopter to put through its paces, Capt Orchard is expecting his time at Cudrose to be demanding and fulfilling.

He said: "Cudrose has an excellent team and a reputation for delivering capable personnel and aircraft to support the Royal Navy on its operations across the world. It is the largest and busiest air station in the Navy and we have some very interesting times ahead. I can't wait to get started."

Capt Orchard joins as the Helston-based air station completes the upgrade of its fleet of Merlin helicopters to the Mk2 model; the latest version of the submarine-hunting aircraft.

"The Merlin Mk 2 helicopter presents a great leap forward in terms of the aircraft's capabilities," he said.

Capt Orchard joined the Royal Navy in 1986 and qualified as a Sea Harrier pilot in 1990.

He brings with him a wealth of front-line experience as well as flying in operations during the Balkan Wars, the second Gulf War and Afghanistan.

He was awarded the OBE in 2008 for his leadership abilities and was made captain in 2011.

Present to museum

CDR Andrew Jackman marked his long association with the Falkland Islands by presenting a White Ensign to the Dockyard Museum Stanley.

Serving first as the Communication Officer on HMS Arrow during the conflict in 1982, he is now at the end of his career on the HQ staff of British Forces South Atlantic Islands as Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations and Intelligence.

Cdr Jackman has served on many classes of warships during his career, including command of HMS Kingfisher, a Bird-class patrol vessel.

Latterly he has specialised in communications and electronic warfare and has filled several staff positions in this role.

His shore-based experiences have seen him deploy across the globe from Norfolk, Virginia to Bahrain; from Sierra Leone to Hong Kong and back again to the Falklands.

During his rare leisure moments in the Falklands he has put his photographic and writing skills to good use, producing a book, *Uniquely Falklands*.

Cdr Jackman presented a White Ensign flown by HMS Arrow in the 1982 conflict to Richard Cockwell, a Trustee of the Dockyard Museum, Stanley as a permanent memory of that ship's service in the South Atlantic.

Veteran aids flying return

ONE of the Royal Navy's most experienced fast-jet pilots will help bring flying back to an RAF airbase.

Cdr Neil Bing, who has two decades' experience on Harriers behind him, will take over as Officer in Charge of Flying – equivalent to Commander Air (aka Wings) at RN air stations – at RAF Wittering.

The Cambridgeshire base was the home of Harrier training for both the Fleet Air Arm and RAF in the jump jet's final years of service – with a then Lt Cdr 'Bing Bong' Bing as senior pilot of 20(R) Squadron for the aircraft's 40th anniversary in 2009.

Since the legendary fighter-bomber retired in 2010, the station was home to numerous RAF and other MOD support units, but military flying ceased.

From last month, however, full-time flying returned as four squadrons and one air experience flight moved into the base.

Cdr Bing works for No. 3 Flight Training School, an RAF organisation which is responsible for all Elementary Flying Training for the Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force.

By the end of June 2015 around 25 Grob Tutor aircraft will be based at Wittering. The first of the trainers arrived during the first week of February, the last landing in June.

"This is a rare privilege. To reintroduce flying to a station and set the tone for flying operations," said Cdr Bing.



● Cdr Neil Bing will oversee the return of flying to RAF Wittering

Trainees shine light on woods



● Trainees Aaron Mullen, Harry Dixon and Daniel Withers with Simon Garner from CORMAC

Picture: Dave Sherfield

TRAINEE sailors from HMS Raleigh joined forces with local volunteers to help maintain the access for the public at Kilminworth Woods near Looe.

The team of seven trainees spent the day at the 58-hectare woods working alongside the Friends of Kilminworth Woods and CORMAC, replacing a sign and removing wood to increase light and stimulate growth as part of the woodland management plan.

Simon Garner, Senior Countryside Officer for CORMAC who manage the woods on behalf of Cornwall Council, said: "There are various routes open for people and one of our roles is to maintain the paths and signs.

Our woodland management manipulates the light that comes into the wood to stimulate growth."

The trainees recently completed their basic training at HMS Raleigh and are awaiting their specialist courses.

Trainee Harry Dixon, 19, from Plymouth, said: "This is something different for us and a chance to get out in the fresh air and help the community.

"This also us to practise some of the skills we've learned in basic training."

Dinner tops faith event

MORE than 50 Jewish military personnel and their families gathered for a faith weekend in Hampshire.

Sailors, soldiers and airmen and women of all ranks attended services conducted by Padre Livingstone, Colonel (Rabbi) Menachem Sebbag, the Principal Chaplain of the Netherlands Armed Forces, and Rabbi Benji Rickman of Manchester.

Lectures included a talk by a Jewish Royal Navy officer who served on the Palestine patrols, the role of religion in the Services and an update on the current terrorism threats.

The highlight of the weekend was a military dinner after Shabbat when greetings from The Queen were read out.

Rabbi Livingstone said: "Our Jewish troops are committed to their faith and they really appreciate the chance to get together with fellow believers who share many of the same experiences."

The next major event for the Armed Forces Jewish Community will be a service in April to mark the liberation of Belsen by British and Canadian troops.

Memories to help charity

A FORMER Royal Naval rating has published memories of 29 years of Naval Service to raise funds for charity.

John Herring joined up in 1958 at the age of 16 and found himself at HMS Pembroke in Chatham, Kent.

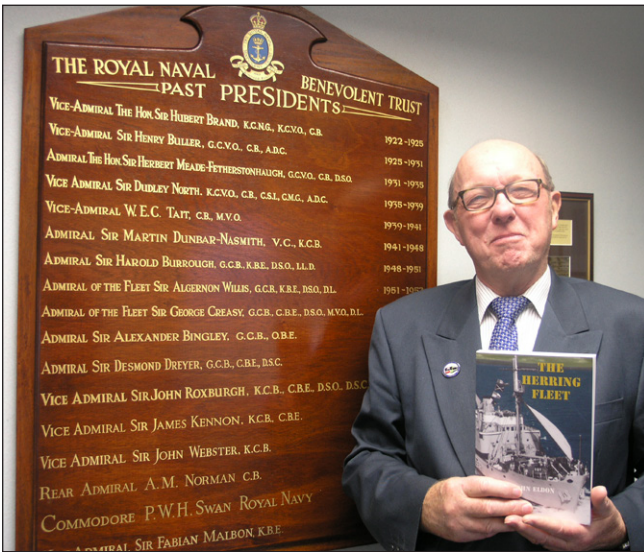
A first draft to a sea-going ship came in April 1959 when in Rosyth Dockyard he got his first rather disappointing look at HMS Adamant, a very lacklustre WW2 Submarine Depot Ship residing at the bottom of an Admiralty Dry Dock.

This was a ship which ultimately was the headquarters of the 3rd Submarine Squadron at Faslane and became a role which was to enlighten his knowledge as a Junior Stores Accountant into the debatable perks of neat rum, the grandiose accommodation onboard his ship and the modernity of telephones.

After 12 months in Faslane there was a short stay in the Somerset countryside getting to grips with the Fleet Air Arm at RNAS Yeovilton.

His next sea-going draft was an 18-month voyage in the South Seas onboard HMS Cook, which John describes in some details in his memoirs *The Herring Fleet*.

Home again and he was drafted to HMS Ganges in Suffolk before joining his third ship. HMS Reclaim, a deep



● John Herring with his book about his time in the Royal Navy

diving and submarine rescue vessel.

John's memoirs also recall the opening of the Forth Road Bridge, a few months in Lochinvar and the funeral of Sir Winston Churchill.

John was promoted to killick while on HMS Terror and then spent three years on HMS Hermione, where he was promoted to acting CPO.

Eventually John found himself selected for promotion to Fleet

Chief. He also writes about the time he spent on FOST staff at HMS Portland, HMS Dolphin and the Dartmouth Training Squadron on HMS Fearless.

During his time in the Royal Navy he became involved with the Royal Navy Benevolent Trust, which will benefit from sales of the tome.

The Herring Fleet can be purchased through the RNBT at corinneday@rnbt.org.uk or telephone 02392 690112.



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● Ross Fleming

Ross finishes the job

WINDSOR and Eton unit Sea Cadet Ross Fleming, 16, is one in a thousand – he achieved the challenging Advanced Seamanship qualification, which only 14 cadets accomplished in 2014 out of 14,000 Sea Cadets.

Ross's achievement is part of a national partnership with Carnival and Sea Cadets.

Carnival Corporation & plc, parent company of P&O Cruises and Cunard, is supporting the Sea Cadets seamanship qualification, which will enable cadets aged between 10 and 18 to broaden their career options in the maritime industry.

The qualification tests Sea Cadets on their knowledge of a range of skills such as rope work, rigging, splicing, canvas work and decorative rope work.

Practical tests include working in a team to rig equipment such as sheer legs, gins and derricks (all forms of lifting contraptions used over the centuries by seafarers).

Ross, a Leading Cadet who joined the Sea Cadet Corps when he was ten years old, said: "I joined Sea Cadets as my older sister and parents were both a part of it so I always wanted to get involved."

"At Sea Cadets I've gained a range of qualifications including second class first aid, piping proficiency, sailing stage 2, rowing coxswains and power level 2."

"Sea Cadets has had a huge effect on my life as it has expanded my knowledge, benefitting me in school as well as in cadets, and offered more choices to me."

"I chose to do Advanced Seamanship as I already had my intermediate and don't like doing 'half a job'."

"I was tested throughout the course on all my knowledge on seamanship, from bend and hitches to structure and material, but what was different was I had to prove my ability to convey that knowledge to others as well."



● SWANSEA unit held a dinner to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Battle of the River Plate. The unit's training ship is *TS Ajax*, which provides the link to the battle – *HMS Ajax* was the command ship of the three-strong Force G that damaged the German raider *Graf Spee* in December 1939, trapping her in harbour at Montevideo and eventually causing her to be scuttled. Pictured are Lt Cdr (SCC) Bill Davies, CO of Swansea unit (left), guest of honour Phillip Chatfield, whose relative Lady Lillian Chatfield, as the wife of the First Sea Lord, launched *HMS Ajax* in 1934, and Capt Brian Thorne, president of the unit

School has crucial role in anniversary

ON January 30 1965, a worldwide TV audience estimated at 350 million watched as the coffin of Sir Winston Churchill was carried along the River Thames to his state funeral.

Exactly 50 years on, as part of the Churchill 2015 commemorations, the restored Port of London Authority vessel *Havengore* retraced that journey, with pupils from the Royal Hospital School in Suffolk, playing an important part in the proceedings.

On a beautiful sunny day, the Guard of the Royal Hospital School marched from the Tower of London to HMS President, the shore establishment of the Royal Naval Reserve, to provide a ceremonial line and salute.

A wreath represented the coffin of Churchill, and the route was lined with spectators, who enjoyed the spectacle of the well-drilled pupils, the Guard Commanders carrying their swords in reverse in a mark of respect, as was done at Churchill's state funeral in 1965.

On arrival at HMS President they were invited to a reception with members of the Churchill family and VIPs.

As *Havengore* cast off from President in the early afternoon the Band of the Royal Hospital School played *Rule Britannia*, *Jerusalem* and other stirring music for members of the Churchill family, and others with closely connections who were on board.

The procession passed under Tower Bridge, which was raised in honour of Sir Winston Churchill as it was in 1965, and there were



● Pupils from the Royal Hospital School parade through London

gun salutes from HMS Belfast and HQS Wellington.

The event culminated in a service and wreath-laying in the waters of the river opposite the Palace of Westminster, with the wreath-bearers drawn from Service personnel who have been involved in recent conflicts such as Afghanistan and Iraq.

The Royal Hospital School Guard was present, echoing the role the Navy had at the State Funeral of pulling the gun carriage.

The Head of Ceremonial at the school, Lt Cdr (Retd) N M Griffiths, said: "I am delighted that the School Guard and Band was selected to commemorate one of the most poignant moments in modern history."

"It was a great honour to be a part of the 50th anniversary of Sir Winston's state funeral and a fantastic privilege for our

pupils to meet descendants of the Churchill family."

The school, which is part of the Crown Charity Greenwich Hospital, was founded more than 300 years ago to educate the sons of seafarers and is historically known as 'the Cradle of the Navy'.

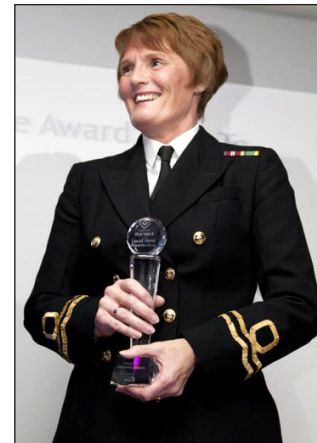
Today it is a mainstream independent co-educational school for around 700 pupils set in 200 acres of Suffolk countryside overlooking the River Stour, but it continues to have strong ties with the Royal Navy.

Pupils continue to celebrate Naval traditions including the

wearing of No 1 Naval uniforms and taking part in ceremonial parades or Divisions at least eight times a year, led by the Band and Guard and attended by high-ranking military personnel or, on occasions, members of the Royal Family.

The school celebrated its tercentenary in 2012, and the milestone was marked by the Duke of York, who opened a new Heritage Centre to house archives and important historical artefacts.

www.royalhospitalschool.org



● Lt (SCC) Karen Black RNR

Surprise civic award for Karen

THE Commanding Officer of a unit in north-west England has won a civic award.

Lt (SCC) Karen Black RNR, CO of Bollington & Macclesfield unit, in Manchester District, won the Pride of Cheshire Award for her services to the Sea Cadets.

Karen works as a full-time medical secretary in the National Health Service, but devotes much of her spare time to the unit.

She took over the running of Bollington and Macclesfield in November 2012, but first offered her time as a volunteer in August 1999.

The award came as something of a surprise to Karen – she had attended the event because she had been nominated for a different category.

When that award went to someone else Karen thought that was the end of her involvement for the evening.

How wrong she was...



They tried – and they liked

CADETS from Farnham unit are pictured with their Try Dive certificates – and judging by their use of the divers' 'ok' hand signal, their response to the day was overwhelmingly positive.

The day was organised by the Diving Officer and Training Officer of TS Swiftsure, BSAC Club B2495, with the assistance of the ASO Southern Area Diving Graham Tanner, and his unit, and London Area dive instructors.

This was the first opportunity for the unit to commence training their cadets after an 18-month hiatus while the Sea Cadet Corps authorities reviewed Sea Cadet diving regulations.

As was expected, a couple of the students said diving was an experience but did not think it suited them just at the moment.

However, the majority of the Cadets took to it like a duck (or maybe dolphin) to water and said

they would be applying for the ocean divers course, which will hopefully be arranged in the early part of this year.

Staff at TS Swiftsure would still like to hear from anyone who could help them progress with the open-water diving.

There is no requirement to join the organisation – although it would be an asset – as there are civilian helpers who are registered on the books.

In such circumstances such people would have to be officially registered and screened under government regulations surrounding adults working with children.

Anyone interested in helping is asked to get in contact with the diving officer Civilian Instructor E J Smith on 07850 821211 or email smithsmoorthy@aol.com (Smoothy) or 1st-lt@farnhamseacadets.org (Bob)

Get in the big picture

ARE you a budding photographer? Do you enjoy taking photos of your Sea Cadet activities?

Enter the prestigious Royal Navy Peregrine Trophy photography competition. There is a special category for Sea Cadets.

Show your skill and creativity as you compete for the chance to show your winning image with some of the Navy's most amazing photography.

Your photos have to be taken when you're taking part at a Sea Cadet or Royal Marines Cadet activity from March 2014 to April 2015, for example a photo of TS Royalist, competing to win the Gib Cup, competing at one of our competitions. The list is endless.

You also have to be a serving Sea Cadet or RMC, aged 13-18.

Volunteers rewarded

TWO volunteers from Guisborough and East Cleveland unit attended a reception hosted by Samantha Cameron to recognise volunteers across the UK.

Unit management volunteers Maret Ward and Gail Gray were nominated by Will Goodhand, MP for Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland, for their hard work in rejuvenating the unit and building vital connections in the local community.

At the reception, at No 10 Downing Street, they spoke to Mrs Cameron about their achievements at the unit, such as opening up career opportunities in the local area by offering ship and port visits to cadets and organising fundraising events to raise money and awareness of the unit.

In addition they set up a community garden project for veterans, Sea Cadets and young people with learning disabilities to enjoy.

Maret Ward said: "Our personal highlight of the night was Mrs Cameron mentioning Sea Cadets in her speech as a fantastic organisation for young people to attend."

New boss at Huddersfield

THERE is a new man in charge of Huddersfield unit.

Following an enjoyable and successful tenure Lt (SCC) Craig Dawson RNR stood down as Commanding Officer of the Yorkshire unit, where he has been an instructor since the early 2000s.

Lt Dawson, 31, who was appointed CO in May 2008, said: "I am so pleased to have had the chance to run the unit for so many years, and to be able to hand over a happy ship to my successor."

He added "Every year has had its highs, and the town of Huddersfield never fails to supply new supporters and lively characters

to keep the staff and me challenged and often entertained.

"Huddersfield Sea Cadets is a treasure enjoyed by all the adults and cadets that are proud to be members.

"It is immensely satisfying to see young and often shy or troubled children join the organisation and then in just a few years leave as confident, grounded and appreciative young adults."

Craig thanked the unit volunteers and supporters he had worked with, stating he was acutely aware that the successes of any Sea Cadet unit, and any voluntary group, are entirely down to an extensive, and sometimes

exhaustive, team effort.

Lt Dawson stood down to follow other interests within the Sea Cadets, and will be working with a number of units in the South Yorkshire District and further afield as the Area Staff Officer for Adventure Training.

CPO (SCC) Kiran Kundi, who has taken over the reins, is a long-standing member of the unit and an experienced Sea Cadet volunteer.

Lt Dawson wished him and the unit the best of luck in this new chapter, which begins with a recruiting campaign – potential cadets and adult volunteers should see www.sea-cadets.org/huddersfield

Tea with 2SL treat for 12 top cadets



A DOZEN top Sea Cadets from across the UK were invited to take tea with one of the Navy's most senior officers.

The lucky dozen were the Navy Board Cadets for 2014 and 2015 – six from each year, each one representing a Corps area.

They travelled to Portsmouth to enjoy afternoon tea with the Second Sea Lord on board HMS Victory in the city's Historic Dockyard.

The cadets were treated to a tour of Nelson's flagship at the battle of Trafalgar, which is currently undergoing a major conservation programme.

By way of contrast, they were then taken on a tour of a modern warship – Type 23 frigate HMS Richmond.

They had lunch with Flag Officer Scotland, Northern England and Northern Ireland (FOSNNI) Rear Admiral John Clink at Victory House, followed by tea with Second Sea Lord,

● *Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Sir David Steel (front row, centre) is joined by the Navy Board Cadets and Hugh Player and Cdr Peter Linstead-Smith (back right) on the steps of Admiralty House*

Picture: LA(Phot) Gary Weatherston

Vice Admiral Sir David Steel.

The event marked the handover from last year's Navy Board Cadets to this year's.

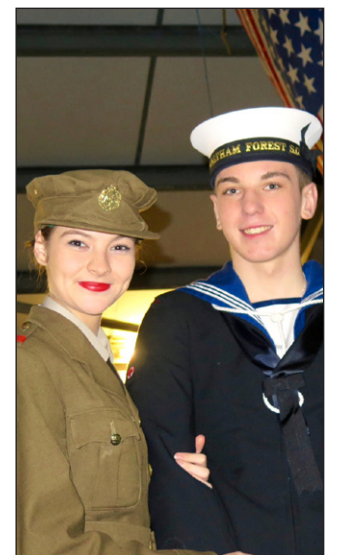
The role of Navy Board Cadet is the most prestigious in the Corps as they represent the voice of cadets in their area and represent the Royal Navy at high-profile Sea Cadet and Royal Navy events, such as the launch of the new £4.8m Corps flagship in Spain just before Christmas.

The Navy Board Cadets for 2015 were handed their new badges by Vice Admiral Steel during the afternoon.

Also at the gathering were Hugh Player, Director of Greenwich Hospital, and Cdr Peter Linstead-Smith, who awarded last year's Navy Board Cadets grants of up to £1,000 to help cover the costs of higher and further education.

Vice Admiral Steel said: "I was delighted to attend the official handover of the Navy Board Cadets.

"Each of the Navy Board Cadets were selected from thousands, and it was an honour to thank the 2014 cadets for their service over the last year acting as Ambassadors for the Navy Board and the Royal Navy, but also to welcome the 2015 cadets into their important new role."



● OC Johns and AB Foxley-Macdonald

Return to the 1940s

OFFICER Cadet Jessica Johns and AB Graham Foxley-Macdonald from TS Acorn took part in a commemorative 1940s evening.

Jessica's uniform was loaned to her by her great-great aunt, who wore it in 1947.

The unit ended a successful year with being awarded a Burgee and the CO Lt Cdr Johns received a National Sea Cadet Award.

MCA is expanding

THE Maritime Cadet Association was formed to support the increasing number of independent Naval youth training organisations that have been formed over the past few years – though some date back as much as six decades, and are still thriving.

These units, whilst not supported or recognised by the Ministry of Defence, work closely with their local communities and strive to maintain the high standards that are seen throughout the Sea Cadet Corps, which is officially recognised by the MOD.

The Association aims to attract the independent units that achieve these standards, supporting and monitoring them.

Membership of the MCA has now reached 16 units, with four more currently being screened for membership.

Advice on child protection, health and safety, insurance and other such matters is readily available.

Various competitions are also held to encourage friendly rivalry.

For more information on the Maritime Cadet Association – for prospective cadets or adult volunteers – see the website www.maritimecadets.co.uk



● *Knots that are good enough to eat – Scarborough unit have been practising their rope work using liquorice laces, madeira cake and icing sugar*

Masts up for flagship Stonehaven members feeling effervescent

TWO months on from her 'launch' and the new Sea Cadet flagship is looking a little more shipshape.

Because the new TS Royalist, which was built in the shipyard of Astilleros Gondan on the north coast of Spain, has now had both her masts fitted.

The ship, which replaces her namesake in time for the 2015 offshore season, was launched shortly before Christmas at a ceremony attended by senior Marine Society Sea Cadets (MSSC) officials, as well as the six Naval Board Sea Cadets representing the six areas of the UK.

The hull was brought to life with two masts, yards and a boom fitted.

Once the sails and final rigging is fitted, the brig will have a sail area of 560 square metres.

The new flagship, which has been custom built to make the sail training custom-built to make the sail training experience even better for cadets, is being officially commissioned and named in May.



STONEHAVEN cadets have taken delivery of an unusual donation from Sainsbury's Berryden in Aberdeen – 30 crates of soft drinks and bottled water, weighing over a tonne.

The drinks, which are in perfect condition, came from multi-packs which became damaged and were unable to be sold.

They will instead be used to support the cadets' tuck shop and to raise money over the year at public events.

Money raised also goes to support local cadets learning to sail and row, as well as undertaking courses such as first aid.

Stonehaven cadets are also fundraising towards building a new unit HQ at the harbour. This year, Stonehaven will host the Grampian District Regatta, and the donation will help them welcome guests from other units.

CO Sub Lt (SCC) Sean Fraser RNR, was delighted to have been approached by the store, and welcomed the donation in kind.

He said: "This can be put to so many different uses, and as well as raising money through fundraising events, it frees up funds normally used for purchasing supplies that will now be used instead for equipment or subsidising training costs."

He added "We were particularly pleased



that the consignment included bottled water as this will be used throughout the boating season to make sure cadets keep hydrated during training afloat, an important part of looking after their welfare.

"From an environmental point of view, we are also getting to benefit from supplies that would simply have been sent to waste otherwise."

Store manager David Vass said: "Sainsbury's Berryden has always supported the local community and as Grocery Online becomes a growing part of our service, we now regard Stonehaven as part of our local community."

The Berryden store co-ordinates online deliveries across north-east Scotland.

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ONE of the UK's leading employers of engineers lifts the lid on what exciting opportunities are available at the forefront of the UK defence industry.

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Greg McNally, AWE

engineering outreach manager, talks about what it's like to work at the cutting edge of the nuclear defence industry.

He said: "In terms of what it's like to work at AWE, our staff tend to be very loyal.

"Job satisfaction is a major part of that, as a lot of what we do is extremely interesting. It can take some time for people to fully understand what we do here."

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Greg says the company offers a breadth of career opportunities for engineers.

He describes AWE as a worldwide centre of excellence for science, engineering and

technology, offering plenty of scope for different roles throughout a long and varied career.

Greg also acts as head of profession for mechanical engineers within the organisation and provides senior ambassadorship for the professional development programme.

Once professional registration is achieved, Greg says there is ample scope for long-term career development.

Greg said: "I am on my seventh career here, having worked in roles as diverse as quality and training.

"It's a fascinating place which offers true diversity."

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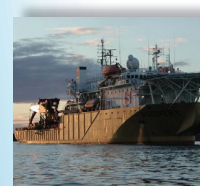
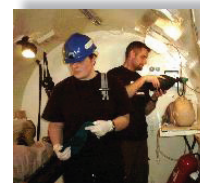
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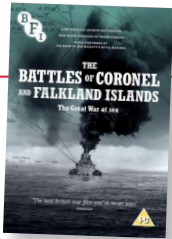
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Silent is golden

LAST year, to considerable acclaim among cinema buffs and moviemakers, the British Film Institute released a restored classic silent Naval movie.

For nearly nine decades, Walter Summers' *The Battles of Coronel and Falkland Islands* had been largely forgotten – until the BFI began the painstaking task of cleaning up the original celluloid for a 21st-Century audience.

Just three months after its gala premiere, the film has been released on DVD and Blu-ray (both £19.99) with numerous extras and a very nicely-produced booklet about the production of the documentary and the restoration process.

These days recreations are the mainstay of most TV documentaries.

The Battles of Coronel and Falkland Islands is entirely recreation; with no original film footage of either battle available, the director made extensive use of the inter-war Navy to plug gaps.

The ships of the Senior Service portrayed both their own side and the German, while the Isles of Scilly doubled as the Falklands (and the latter islands' governor was apparently none-too-pleased with the depiction of his defence force as something of a mix of *Keystone Cops* and *Dad's Army*).

Apart from recreating some interiors in a studio and some trick photography to depict the final moments of HMS Monmouth especially, *The Battles of the Coronel and the Falklands* is a remarkably authentic documentary.

Indeed, cast aside the film's title and you have the rare chance of seeing moving images of the grandeur of the Royal Navy, not quite at its prime, but in the mid-1920s still a most formidable force.

So we have incomparable footage of battleships Malaya and Barham, standing in for battle-cruisers Inflexible and Invincible (the former was scrapped in 1921, the latter blew up at Jutland), in full flow, their main armament spewing fire and fury.

In addition, there's footage of the (very basic) wireless rooms and stokers hard at it in the engine rooms.

All of which makes for a spotter's delight – and would make many NN readers dip into their pockets.

But more than that, *The Battles of Coronel and Falkland Islands* is a good film. And given when it was produced – just nine years after the war's end – what strikes you is the evenhandedness of the film. Von Spee is no Hunnish monster but a man of honour who prefers to toast a gallant foe than to smite the English.

In its day, it apparently drew comparisons with the seminal *Metropolis* and *Battleship Potemkin*.

It's not as ambitious as the former or as groundbreaking technically as the latter.

But it is compelling viewing – the 117 minutes of the main feature fly by (and you can't say that too often about lengthy silent films).

That it moves at pace is down to some excellent set pieces from Summers – the montage of dockyard workers readying the capital ships for sea wouldn't be out of place in a present-day movie – and a stirring soundtrack by composer Simon Dobson, recorded by the Band of HM Royal Marines.

The net result? A must for anyone interested in the Great War/battleships/Grand Fleet/ British movie history.

ON DECEMBER 10 last year, the Royal and United States Navies published a 'Shared Vision' for future co-operation.

While laudable in itself – especially in a world where British carriers may well operate with American aircraft in some circumstances – its history was a little strange, writes Prof Eric Grove.

Those fighting the War of 1812 might have been surprised that they were participating in a history of collaboration dating back to the early 19th Century.

It is true that in that century, racial attitudes did foster ideas of US-British Empire condominium; indeed, the Foreign Office put the USA outside the list of potential enemies in the early 20th Century.

In reality, the RN maintained a 'two-power standard' against both Germany and the USA (under the cover of 'one power plus 60 per cent') right up to 1914. Fisher included the USA in war plans and the Americans produced their Plan Red for war against the British Empire.

During the 1914-18 war, the Americans complained about British economic warfare and seizures of ships and cargoes and only the activities of the U-boats swung the balance in favour of war with Germany in 1917.

Anglo-American tension led the Wilson administration in 1916 to begin construction of a 'Navy second to none' to allow the USA to defend its interpretation of freedom of the seas from allcomers – notably Britain. When sent to cooperate with the British, Admiral Sims was told by Benson, the CNO: "We'd as soon as fight them as the Germans."

Death of a great liner

2.10pm, Friday, May 7 1915. *Kapitänleutnant* Walther Schwieger makes a single-word entry in the log of his U-20: *Treff* – hit.

The terse note in the diary suggests nothing of the drama, tragedy and international outrage which followed Schwieger's 'hit'.

For the victim of that hit was the liner *Lusitania*. Walther Schwieger had just committed the most (in)famous torpedoing in history.

The impending 100th anniversary of the Cunarder's sinking has prompted American Erik Larson to plough through dusty archives, memoirs, old telegrams and newspaper cuttings to produce a gripping piece of narrative history which moves almost with the same pace as Schwieger's torpedo.

Reading *Dead Wake: The Last Crossing of the Lusitania* (Doubleday, £20 ISBN 978-03074-08860) what's surprisingly striking are the number of parallels with the Titanic disaster three years earlier.

No, there's no iceberg. Nor was this *Lusitania*'s maiden voyage. But there was a good smattering of glitterati aboard for the crossing from New York to Liverpool. And, above all, there's a staggering amount of complacency, naivety, even arrogance – not to mention a good degree of bad luck – all conspiring against the 1,959 souls aboard.

Cunard officials didn't go so far as to label the liner 'unsinkable' – after Titanic, no-one dared use such a tag.

But they did do everything to suggest she was *invulnerable*. Despite war raging in Europe, despite an almost unrestricted German submarine campaign since February 1915, despite Berlin warning passengers on any transatlantic liner which flew the Red Ensign that it was liable to be sunk if it sailed through the 'war zone' around the British Isles (pictured right), Cunard regarded their liner as too fast for any submarine to sink (*Lusitania* was ten knots quicker than any U-boat). And besides, given her size, her lines and her four funnels, *Lusitania* was unmistakable.

Exigences of war saw the Americans expand construction of smaller craft at the expense of capital ships and a close operational relationship with the RN quickly developed, as American Professor Donald J Lisio shows in his fascinating new book *British Naval Supremacy and Anglo-American Antagonisms 1914-1930* (Cambridge University Press, £65 ISBN 978-1107-05695-4).

Despite the existence of some pro-British sentiment among some American naval officers, the old rivalries soon re-emerged.

The Americans stood by their traditional attempt to deny the British the belligerent rights that the latter regarded as a major fruit of their maritime power and the need to defend these saw the Americans continue to plan for war with the British Empire.

The General Board, the major policy committee of the US Navy – put it simply: "History shows that no war between two peoples or nations can be termed 'unthinkable'. Who, in 1830, foresaw four years of war between the North and the South? Blood relationship counted for little."

Plan Red scenarios were gamed out every year at the US Naval War College Newport – and usually the British won. This was because the US Navy felt betrayed by its politicians at the Washington Conference in 1921-22.

There they felt the Royal Navy had been allowed to maintain supremacy, despite the

THE GROVE REVIEW

appearance of parity in capital ships.

Those who think Washington was a blow to the British will be fascinated at Lisio's accounts of American attitudes to what they regarded as a clear defeat at the negotiating table. The British ensured they retain the rights to build without numerical limits in the smaller, rather misnamed 'auxiliary' categories, cruisers, destroyers and submarines. The only limit was that cruisers (still officially 'light cruisers') could not exceed 10,000 tons or carry guns bigger than 8in.

Lisio develops a fascinating thesis that the Royal Navy, led by First Sea Lord Earl Beatty, developed a strategy to build such ships rapidly to out-gun the rest of the world's cruisers – just as Dreadnought had revolutionised capital ship design before the war.

In a serious tussle with Chancellor of the Exchequer Winston Churchill, who wanted to do other things with his money, Churchill persistently denied the likelihood of war with Japan, the main target of these ships, going as far as to claim there never would be a war with Japan in his lifetime (so much for the far-seeing statesman of legend).

The Admiralty put much faith in the new 8in gun, but this proved to be a considerable disappointment which, Lisio argues, led Beatty to re-espouse arms control to limit the building of better 8in-gunned ships by rivals.

This led to the abortive Geneva

Another big surprise is the scope of the Royal Navy's intelligence gathering in 1915.

In the multimedia era of 2015, we expect intelligence agencies to almost know more than we do about ourselves and our own actions.

The Admiralty's fledgling cryptanalysis organisation, Room 40 – forerunner of the present-day GCHQ – was incredibly well-informed about Germany's U-boat arm and the men who led it. Some U-boat commanders were bullies, others ruthless. Walther Schwieger was "very pleasant and popular".

When Schwieger's U-20 put to sea, Room 40 tracked its movements courtesy of the radio reports the boat sent back.

Those same intercepted messages placed from the ether also revealed the German Admiralty was tracking the *Lusitania*'s movements and – as Larson puts it – was "fair game", however invulnerable Cunard thought her.

And the speed which the liner's owners and her skipper Capt William Turner believed would allow *Lusitania* to outrun any U-boat counted for little when she cut across the bows of U-20 at a range of just 700 metres.

Lookouts and passengers saw the torpedo's wake, but there was nothing the liner could do to avoid it.

The author provides a visceral description of the aftermath of the *Treff* – skillfully weaving accounts of passengers, crew and the U-boats crew.

At first many passengers believed – like Titanic before her – that, though wounded, *Lusitania* would survive. One man called out: "The captain says the boat will not sink." His fellow travellers cheered and rather than clamber into the lifeboats, many returned to

their cabins.

Lusitania did sink – in a mere 18 minutes, her demise hastened by a second explosion whose cause has never been fully explained and by the Atlantic pouring through the many open portholes as passengers aired their cabins in the pleasant spring weather.

Time allowed for only a quarter of the ship's lifeboats to be launched, while many people took to the water with their lifejackets on incorrectly. And if they didn't drown, many succumbed to hypothermia while they awaited rescue.

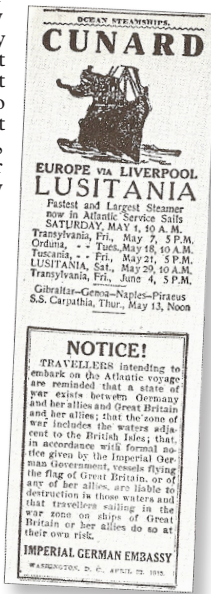
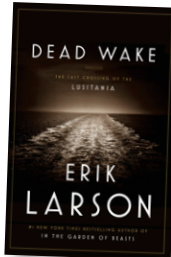
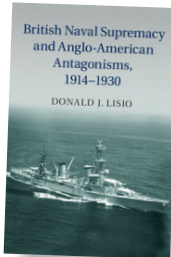
Nearly 1,200 men and women were lost in the tragedy (some of the victims were washed up on the shores of Ireland as late as July, most were devoured by the Atlantic).

A coroner's jury quickly passed sentence: Germany had committed "wilful and wholesale murder", but the Admiralty blamed Capt Turner for the tragedy. One senior officer claimed at best he was guilty of "almost inconceivable negligence", at worst of being nobbled by Germans to deliberately put his ship in harm's way, while First Sea Lord Jacky Fisher demanded the arrest of the skipper.

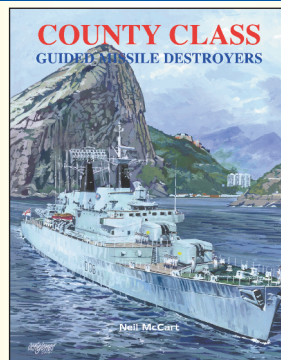
Privately, Fisher applauded Germany's ruthless conduct of the U-boat war. "I'd have done the same myself, only our idiots in England wouldn't believe it when I told them."

More than 100 Americans died in the sinking – the disaster helped sway US opinion firmly towards the Allied cause, not helped by some less-than-sympathetic comments by the German embassy in Washington.

"You read of thousands of Russians or Germans being killed and pass it over without qualm," the military attaché snarled when buttonholed by reporters. "This will bring it home to you."



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Promotions & Assignments

Rear Admiral His Royal Highness The Duke of York KG GCVO ADC to be promoted to Vice Admiral from February 19. Honorary Rear Admiral His Royal Highness Prince Michael of Kent GCVO to be promoted Honorary Vice Admiral Royal Naval Reserve from March 9.

Cdr A J Jameson ADC RN, Commander Maritime Reserves, will in addition assume the appointment of Chief Naval Logistics Officer from March 10.

Capt D N Bone promoted Cdr from January 4 and to be Commander British Forces South Atlantic Islands from April 9.

Capt C Wood to be CO of HMS Dragon from December 2015.

Cdr J W Band promoted Capt and Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff Branch Manager within NCHQ from January 6.

Cdr J Vickers promoted Capt and Special Projects Multi Air Platforms Project Team Leader within Defence Equipment and Support from January 20.

Cdr M F Rose promoted Capt and Defence Engineering Champion Team Leader from February 2.

Cdr P R Russell to be promoted Captain and to be Captain Sea Cadets from April 20.

Cdr S M R Moorhouse to be promoted Captain and to be CO of HMS Ocean from August.

Swap Draft

AB Jay Muir Supply chain, working within QM department at RMB Stonehouse, Plymouth; remaining time on draft just over 18 months. Wanting any supply chain draft in and around HMNB Clyde including Coulpport. 3CDOX-30CDOIX QM SPARE 2 or Jason.Muir100@mod.uk

Entries for the Deaths and Reunions columns, and for Swap Drafts, in April's Noticeboard must be received by **March 13**

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Deaths

Capt Terence G V Percy DSC. HMS Tyne, Newcastle, Indomitable, Daedalus, Venerable, Drake, Heron, Terror, President also 820 NAS, DGM and SNLO New Zealand. January 18. Aged 95.

Capt Richard E Roe CBE. HMS Glamorgan, Tyne, Falcon, Warrior, President, St Vincent, Cardigan Bay, Bellerophon, Vernon, Philomel and Victory (RNB). February 1.

Capt David A Carr RD** RNR List 1. HMS Wessex and King Alfred. January 13. Aged 72.

Surg Capt Michael C H Jackson. RN Hospitals Malta and Haslar, also HMS Albion. January 3. Aged 89.

Cdr Arthur King. Joined Royal Indian Navy. Trained in cruiser Froisher, first ship was HMIS Clive, searching Andaman and Nicobar Islands for Japanese spies disguised as pearl fishermen. 1938 appointed to training ship Dalhousie where he learned Urdu; 1939 helped set up Navy Office in Delhi. 1941 appointed to HMIS Jumna on Atlantic convoy duties. First Lt of HMIS Cauvery; when her captain fell ill, he took command, escorting Atlantic convoys and later hunting Japanese submarines in the Indian Ocean. Supervised refit of cruiser Achilles, recommissioned as HMIS Delhi. Left the service after Indian independence. Supported restoration of frigate Trincomalee (built Bombay 1816). November 7. Aged 97.

Cdr John Stanley Edwards DSC. Joined the RNR aged 17 then transferred to the FAA prior to the Korean War. Flew Seafire, Sea Fury, Firefly, Swordfish and Naval version of Mosquito. Shot down in Korea, landed in the sea and, under fire from the shore, was rescued by an American in a Catalina. Served in HMS Illustrious, Ocean, Glory, Unicorn and Belfast. Member RN Photographers Association. December 28. Aged 84.

Cdr James S Carter. HMS Saker, Eagle, Vernon, Relentless, Seahawk, President, NATO and DGW(N). January 28. Aged 91.

Cdr Edward W deW Waller. HMS

Heron, Eagle, Seahawk, Centurion, RNAY Belfast, FONAC and R Signals Malvern. January 3. Aged 83.

Cdr Richard L Edmonds. HMS Adamant, Terror, President, Glasgow, Southampton, Illustrious and Engineer in Chief. January 24.

Cdr Peter R Elias DSC. NATO and DG Ships. January 24. Aged 93.

Lt Cdr Sir Robert Atkinson DSC**. As a Sub Lt RNR he took command of luxury yacht Lorna, owned by a bank chairman, and sailed her to Gibraltar. Seized an Italian tanker and its cargo and sailed her back to UK, receiving Admiralty prize money. Second-in-command of HMS Rhododendron, winning first DSC in 1941 for sinking a surfaced U-boat, later captain of HMS Azalea, patrolling Denmark Strait. Second DSC for sinking a U-boat in 1943, and mentioned in despatches for rescuing crew of American Liberator. Sank third U-boat in 1944 while commanding HMS Tintagel Castle; continued North Atlantic convoy duties until end of the war. Demobbed in 1946, he went into shipbuilding in Canada; later became chairman of British Shipbuilders. Retired with knighthood in 1983. January 25. Aged 98.

Capt Simon H Down RM. 41 & 45 Cdo, RM Deal and Eastney, BRNC Dartmouth, HMS Bulwark, Seahawk, JWE Old Sarum and RMR Scotland. January 7. Aged 75.

Lt Cdr Geoffrey W Osborne. HMS Orion, Drake, Roebuck, Venus, Cockade, Glory, Indomitable, Mercury and Collingwood. January 5. Aged 87.

Lt Cdr Gerald F Stride. HMS Osprey, Falcon, Daedalus, Siskin, Indomitable, Theseus, Heron and 820 NAS. January 29. Aged 89.

Lt Cdr Gerald F Arnold. HMS Grebe also 826, 817 and 860 NAS. Jan 12.

Lt Cdr Brian Holdsworth. Observer with 826, 700G, 849 and 829; also Ops2 Ark Royal and Ops Albion. October 20.

Henry 'Hank' A Adlam. Pilot with 890, 1839 and 1846. January 2.

Lt Peter N Arkell RNR. 880 NAS and HMS Implacable. February 16.

Lt David A Flower. HMS Echo, Beagle, Hecla and Daring. January 19. Aged 79.

Lt Thomas F Spriggs RNR. HMS Kestrel. January 13. Aged 94.

Lt Michael S Thomas. HMS Bulwark Albion, Victorious, Hermes, Eagle, 706, 792, 814, 820, 825 and 849B NAS. January 15.

Lt Kenneth E Ward DSC RNR. 894 NAS. 1833 Reserve Squadron and HMS Indefatigable. November 30.

Sports Lottery

Jan 17: £5,000 – Cdr G Ruddock; £1,800 – Capt S Brand; £800 – AB V Martin; £600 – PO C Grant; £500 – AB D Webster; £400 – CPO D Mathieson.

Jan 24: £5,000 – PO D Scott; £1,800 – LH T Jones; £800 – Sgt P McGeechan; £600 – LH E Harber; £500 – Lt J Hodgkiss; £400 – Cpl S Warrington.

Jan 31: £5,000 – CPO A McClelland; £1,800 – Lt M Amor; £800 – Cpl D Slingsby; £600 – LH P Havelock; £500 – Lt P Day; £400 – LH D Ebdon.

Lt Roger J Whitby. HMS Andromeda, Otter, Opportune, Dolphin and FOSM. January 10.

Sub Lt (A) Iain Crosbie RNRV. Pilot 817 NAS. December 14.

Francis 'Frank' James Hodges CPO QA. Joined as boy bugler, served 1938-63 in HMS Fearless, Repulse (survived sinking), Kedah, Implacable and Belfast. Member of the RBL. December 21. Aged 92.

Tom 'Bill' Bailey SBCPO. Served 1939-61 at RNH Haslar, HMHS Vita, RNAH Sherborne, LST40 (Normandy landings), HMS Premier, Daedalus (CMB), Collingwood and St Vincent. Life Member RN Medical Branch Ratings & Sick Berth Staff Association. January Aged 94.

Gordon Richard Baines LS. Served 1951-63 at Chatham. On parade for the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II while with HMS Swiftsure and 1956-63 was with the Pembroke field gun crew at Earls Court. December 20. Aged 81.

Jack Codmand Telegraphist. HMS Cheviot 1947 and member of the

Reunions

March 2015

TS Alacrity 50th Year Cadet Reunion: Jack Hotchin has been involved in cadets for 50 years, 21 of them as part of junior cadet group, TS Alacrity. We would like to invite ex-cadets and anyone who has known Jack over the 50 years to join us for a reunion tribute evening at Denmead Memorial Hall on March 7 1900 to 2300, starting with a presentation from TS Alacrity, including band, and awards and trophies. Raffle, and refreshments including small buffet; evening will end with party/disco. Bring old photo albums or cadet memorabilia. RSVP to tsalacrity@yahoo.co.uk

HMS Glory Association half-yearly reunion at the Savoy Hotel, Bournemouth, March 20 to 23. Contact Bernie Cohen at b.cohen2@ntlworld.com or tel 0161 946 1209 or 07806 782720.

HMS/m Valiant reunion on March 28 at Liverpool Maritime Museum, 1400 to 1700. Numbers limited. Charity raffle will raise funds for Help for Heroes and a cancer charity. Contact Steven Large at reunions@wearehmsvaliant.com or write to Valiant Reunion, Suite 403, Claymore House, 145 Kilmarnock Road, Glasgow G41 3JA.

April 2015

HMS Hermes Reunion from April 9-13 at the Holiday Inn, Chatham, Kent. Various packages available 1, 2, 3, 4 nights or just gala dinner. Bookings via IOW Tours on 01983 405116. See www.hmshermes.org.uk or contact hmshermes@btinternet.com for details.

HMS Collingwood Association reunion at the Hillcrest Hotel, Widnes, April 17-20. Contact Shirley Winn, IOW Tours, at enquiries@iowtours.com, tel 01983 405116 or see www.hmsscollingwood.weebly.com or email hmsscollingwood42@gmail.com

May 2015

HMS Opossum Association reunion at Red Lea Hotel, Scarborough, May 29 to June

Association. September 19.

David Budd OA. Served 1949-73. Joined as an Artificer Apprentice (Series 7) Sept 1949. Served in HMS Figgard, Caledonia, Mounts Bay, Gambia, Plymouth and Decoy. Member of Magnificent Seven Artificer Apprentices. December 13. Aged 81.

Frank A Bond CPO Electrical. Served through WW2. On board HMS Suffolk 1941 for the first Russian convoy. A member of the Russian Convoy Club and HMS Belfast Association. January 6. Aged 91.

Colin Beatty LS. Joined HMS Ganges 1950 and served HMS Enard Bay, Largo Bay, St Vincent, Newcastle, Ladybird, Victory, Dryad, Hornet, Ceylon, Wave and Duncan. Commissioned into the Army 1960, retiring from the RA 1969. Became a teacher, then lawyer and finished as Senior Policy Executive in Legal Education for the Law Society of England and Wales. HMS Ganges Association. January 14. Aged 80.

Paul Hymers RO1. Served 1974-80. HMS Ark Royal 1976-78. January 17. Aged 56.

1. All Opossums from commissions 1945-1960 as well as submarine 1963-90 and wives/partners welcome. Contact IOW Tours, 3 New Rd, Sandown, PO36 9JN or email enquiries@iowtours.com, 01983 405116 or contact Eddie Summerfold at robopovan@btinternet.com or 0161 764 8778.

June 2015

HMS Liverpool Association reunion June 13 at GIs Association, Whale Island, mustering at 1200. Association includes the cruiser and destroyer. Contact John Parker at info@hmsliverpoolassociation.org.uk or tel 023 9252 1222.

September 2015

HMS Crane Association U23/F123 (1942-62) reunion and AGM at the Gateway Hotel, Nottingham, September 18-20. Details from Joe Smith at cranebird@btinternet.com or Tony Nuttall on 0115 952 6363.

HMS Jamaica Association AGM/ reunion, Burlington Hotel, Eastbourne Sept 18-21. Contact Mac Wilkinson at mjwilkinson22@talktalk.net or 01843

Ask Jack

Former Shipwrights. William Long, who entered Chatham as a shipwright apprentice in 1940, would like anyone who remembers him to contact him at williamclong25@yahoo.com or 1129 Cecil Ave. S. Millersville, MD21108, USA.

Lt Cdr Peter Stent: I am trying to locate relatives of Lt Cdr Stent to return items left with my husband by John Monteith for safekeeping. Mr Stent was fatally injured in a road accident around 1970-71. Among the items are two commemorative cups, one engraved *Lt Cdr P Stent RN, HMS Peregrine, Oct 1956*, the other engraved *Lt Cdr P Stent RN by Southern Air Division RNRV 1957*, and a book, indicating that he retired February 15 1962. If you are a relative of Mr Stent contact Mrs B Stent at frankgregory@talktalk.net

John William Lovell, Seaman Gunner. Served HMS Orion 1943-46, seeing action at Normandy, Anzio and South of France. HMS Orion Association. November 26.

John Guest Sto Mech. Served 1949-51 HMS Hornet and Plover. RN Engineer Association. January 5. Aged 85.

Gerry 'George' Scott CEM. Served HMS Lowestoft. January 6. Aged 68.

Leonard C Patten Signaller/communicator. National Service. Trained HMS Mercury, served in HMS Vengeance and Boxer. Royal tour to Australia on board SS Gothic serving as Royal Yacht. Played football for the RN. Became cox'n/mech of Newhaven Lifeboat, instructor with the Newhaven & Seaford Sea Cadets and an instructor on board TS Royalist. Member of the RCNA. January 11. Aged 85.

Stanley 'Stan' Underwood AB. Served in HMS Ready, Algerines Association. October 18. Aged 88.

Maurice Britten Ldg/Wrm. Served in HMS Persian. Algerines Association. December 27. Aged 90.

582283.

Lascaris (Malta) Association: Did you serve ashore or on a ship based in Malta GC? 25th anniversary reunion at the Royal Beach Hotel, Southsea, September 21-25, or gala dinner alone at 1930 on 23rd for £29, including entertainment by Shep Woolley. Booking form and details from Jim Goode lascarismlta@aol.com or Four Winds, Rock Lane, Ludlow, Shropshire, SY8 1SF

October 2015

BRNC Dartmouth, September 1975 entry reunion planned at Dartmouth October 2-4. Main event will be a dinner at the college October 3. Contact Alan Cartwright at ra.cartwright@tiscali.co.uk or tel 07711 640127.

HMS Caprice (1968) Association reunion at the Maritime Club, Portsmouth, on October 2-3, with dinner on October 3. Contact Graham Latter at gj@hmscaprice1968.org.uk, see www.hmscaprice1968.org.uk or tel 01482 632276.

or tel 01983 406446.

Mounts Bay/Opossum 1956-58: Seeking the whereabouts of AB Knocker Quint, Mounts Bay/Opossums football team 1956-58. AB (Hank) Hancock would like to get in touch through A/B (young George) Tom Crawford at tompatt2009@live.co.uk

William Solomon was a 17 to 18-year-old seaman believed lost when HMS Quorn was sunk in 1944. AJEX Military Museum has a letter from his uncle dated 1985 (now deceased) describing this but the museum cannot find William on the CWGC website as killed/MIA. Any Quorn survivors who may have known him are asked to contact Martin Sugarman at martin.sugarman@yahoo.co.uk or tel 0208 986 4868 after 7pm; 07806 656756 anytime.

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Applications close no later than 1700hrs on Friday 20th March 2015.

Interviews will take place w/c 6th April 2015.

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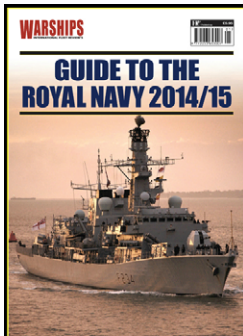
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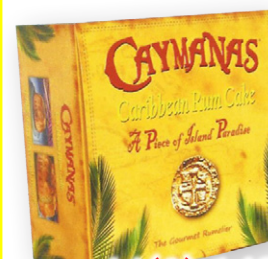
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Magic for matelots in the white stuff



- Top: - Lt Jen Taylor (MCM1 Faslane)
- Centre: Lt Alex Winning (CTCRM)
- Below: HMS Vigilant's intermediate ski team from left, Lt Shaun MacKay, Lt Cdr Titch Evans, Lt Emma Yearling, PO "Doc" Tippet and Sub Lt Sophie Brook



AROUND 900 skiers and snowboarders descended on the French resort of Tignes for two weeks of competition and fun on the slopes.

The Royal Navy Winter Sports Association's Alpine Championships was definitely an event of two halves.

Week one proved challenging, particularly for novices, with very little snow.

But a decent couple of nights' snowfall brought decent conditions for week two and the serious racing.

The Alpine Championships has two distinct sides to it: the racing (which helps the RN ski and snowboard team captains to identify new talent), but equally important the huge amount of instruction that took place during the two weeks.

Cdr Rob Taylor from the RNWSA said: "What we try and do is develop a lot of peoples' expertise on snow and that ranges right from beginners all the way to the race training.

"To give you an example, we've had about 130 beginners here on snow over the two weeks including skiers who are achieving their ski foundation course, and also snowboarders. "In addition, we've got several hundred people who are competing in a variety of races, including giant slalom, slalom, snowboard cross and slope style.

"To see people develop, to see people take to the snow for the first time and to see the racing has been absolutely wonderful.

"My key highlight has been the beginners' race, it is always a highlight of the championships."

In both ski and snowboard disciplines there were beginner lessons for those that have never been on the snow before, plus novice (one step up from beginner), intermediate and advanced lessons to cater for all abilities.

There is financial assistance available to personnel that complete a minimum amount



● The Royal Navy Ski Team at Tignes, France

Pictures: LA(Phot) Joel Rouse and LA(Phot) Rhys O'Leary

of qualifying events (see BR9471, the official guide to the alpine championships for details) and most people opted for two days of instruction to improve their technique plus a race to test themselves against the competition.

The options for racing were very varied and included boarder-cross, skier-cross, slope-style snowboarding, slalom and giant slalom.

Additionally most of the disciplines were broken down into 'A' races for the more experienced skiers and boarders and 'B' races for those who were newer to the sport.

For the very newest recruits to the slopes there were special beginners and novice races held both weeks to allow people to show off their new found skills.

The beginners' races are always a highlight of the ski camps, with new skiers and

boarders snaking their way down a short, floodlit slalom course near the centre of Tignes, main image, while the spectators (amply insulated from the cold evening air by free vin chaud) cheer them on merrily from the sidelines.

The more serious side to the alpine championships became apparent towards the end of the second week after the RN ski and snowboard squads arrived in the resort and the final few longer races were scheduled.

For skiers the last two days included the super giant slalom (the 'Super G') and the premier Super G races (which competitors have to qualify for from the earlier giant slalom races), and for the boarders the big crowd pleaser, the slope style.

These last few events are the final chance for potential team members to impress their captains and earn their

spot in the RN team for the Inter-Services competition at Meribel.

POPT Lucy McKenna, the women's snowboard team captain and snowboard team manager, said: "In particular, the discovery of excellent new talent to come through and replace the old guard was extremely encouraging and bodes well for the future."

LAET Ross Taylor, of RNAS Cudrose, won gold in the Inter Services Boardercross competition, retaining his title. Also hitting the slopes were members of HMS Vigilant's ship's company.

The 16 sailors, a mixture of skiers and snowboarders of all abilities, competed well, particularly Lt Dave Hobby, who was placed in the boardercross final, and Sub Lt Sophie Brook, who picked up silver in the female intermediate giant slalom event.

Sub Lt Brook said: "It was





● Above: Mne Johnny Valencia, 42 Cdo; Below left: Lt Holly Henderson, women's team captain; Below right: Lt Chris Sharrot,



an excellent week of skiing with friends and colleagues. Representing HMS Vigilant and bringing home a silver medal made the experience even more worthwhile."

The most senior officer to attend from HMS Vigilant, Lt Cdr Titch Evans, said: "It is unusual that a sea-going submarine is able to allow so many people to conduct representative sport at this level."

"The ski championships are challenging, worthwhile and I would highly recommend them to everyone in the Service."

Ten members of HMS Ramsey also took part in the championships.

"While the ship is having some maintenance carried out on her this was a wonderful opportunity to get my people away to undertake adventurous training," said the ship's CO Lt Cdr Ash Spencer,

Lt Tyler Smart battled his

way through qualifying and some tough heats to come third in the boarder-cross final – a brilliant effort on a borrowed board.

Ramsey's medical adviser, Surg Cdr Richard Kershaw won the Men's Giant Slalom – beating 130 competitors, with Lt Cdr Spencer finishing in the top third.

As is tradition, the winner was pelted with snowballs as he stood atop the podium; such is the price for success.

The highlight of the week for the Ramsey contingent was the progress of the five beginners who received some first class instruction from the Ski Association instructors.

After a week of bruises and adrenaline they were awarded their Ski Foundation 1 certificates and took part in a short night race; AB Divers Hulme and Rowley finished a very respectable ninth and tenth.



● Above: Lt Katie Steele; Below: Mne Elliot Underwood, 42 Cdo



● AB Gareth Rowley from HMS Ramsey



You'll love it at Wimbledon

THE Royal Navy is recruiting 108 ratings to serve as stewards at the Wimbledon tennis championships this summer.

The Senior Service has provided stewards to the All England Lawn Tennis Championships since 1947.

Royal Navy stewards get the added bonus of manning the famous Centre Court as well as Court One.

More than 300 personnel from all three Services are recruited to be stewards at the two-week tennis championships every year.

Their responsibilities include helping the public get from their queue positions outside the courts to their seats, ensuring that members of the public abide by Wimbledon rules – such as turning off mobile phones during play – and making sure that members of the audience are comfortable and well-hydrated.

As over half of those who are chosen must have done the job before, the competition is fierce for the hundreds of personnel who apply to work at Wimbledon, so for those who are chosen success is so much sweeter.

This year's championships run

from June 29 to July 12 (one week later than usual), however play could continue for an extra day and personnel must be prepared to stay until after duties on July 13 if required.

Personnel need to use their leave allocation if they are selected for the championships.

The AELTC pay a daily rate of both accommodation and food allowance for each day of the Championships.

This year the stewards will be able to use a new building which houses changing rooms, showers and a restaurant solely for the use of military personnel and London Fire Brigade stewards.

As part of the Safety of Grounds Act (1985) all those selected to be Service Stewards will be required to report to Wimbledon on June 28 to undergo a short period of training in emergency evacuation and fire-fighting procedures. Instructions detailing the day's events will be issued to all those personnel selected.

For an application form see 2015DIN01-014. The closing date for applications is Friday April 17.

Six of the best as James takes title

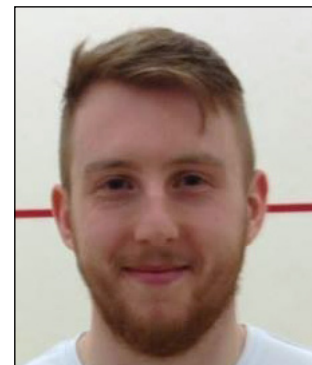
A ROYAL Navy sailor from Solihull is proving to be something of an ace on the squash court with several prestigious titles to his name.

ET(ME) James Prendeville, of HMS Daring, was crowned Combined Services Under 25 Squash champion last October then went on to win the Royal Navy Under 25 Tournament as well as the Royal Navy Senior Championship.

James started his squash career in Birmingham, aged just nine, and has never stopped.

Having joined the Royal Navy in 2013 and completed his sea training, last year was his first year representing the Senior Service on the court – so to take three major titles was quite an achievement for someone making their debut.

In order to be crowned the Combined Services Under 25 champion James had to battle his way through six tough matches against opponents from the Army and RAF.



● ET(ME) James Prendeville

But for the 21-year-old, from Solihull, it was Royal Navy Senior Championship that meant the most.

He said: "It was a great day and I was so pleased to win both the Under 25s and the Senior categories. I am really looking forward to competing in the Inter-Services match."

Starter's orders

THE annual military national hunt race meeting takes place at Sandown Park on March 6.

The Grand Military features six races, including two for military jockeys – The Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother Memorial Amateur Handicap Hurdle and the Grand Military Gold Cup.

Premier tickets are offered at the discount price of £13, redeemable with the code GM2015, or grandstand tickets for £6, redeemable with the code GMGS2015 when booking in advance at www.sandown.co.uk or via telephone: 0844 579 3012.

This represents a saving of up to £12 per ticket as premier tickets for the fixture will cost £22.50 in advance or £25 on the day.

Anyone interested in leasing a horse for the Grand Military Gold Cup as an individual or group, can get more information from Major (Retd) Charlie Lane, 01749 812140 or email charlie@coachroadfarm.co.uk.

Fighting talk...

ROYAL Marines of Plymouth-based 30 Commando IX have recruited a ten-man boxing squad for the first time for many years.

The team, from Royal Marines Stonehouse, are training for the Royal Marines Novice Boxing Championships held at Commando Training Centre Lympstone, near Exmouth, as Navy News went to press.

The tournament attracts Royal Marines units from around the country for an exciting evening of boxing.

Sgt Robert Garthland, 34, the unit physical training instructor for 30 Cdo, will also be stepping into the ring to compete.

He said, "This is the largest team put together in a number of years. We have managed to get funding for new kit including, punch bags and tracksuits."

He added, "The team train full time but also have to carry on working their normal working routines, which takes its toll on the men."

Heroes of Telemark



● Mne Dobie won the Downhill Classic

A ROYAL Marine Reservist took two trophies during his first attempt at ski racing at the Royal Navy/Royal Marines Telemark Championships in Austria.

Mne Angus Dobie, 22, was named the RN Championship's individual winner after finishing first in the Downhill Classic and second in the Downhill Sprint.

The Scotsman also won the best novice prize for the overall UK Championships, winning a set of skis as well as some interest from the Great Britain team coach.

Mne Dobie, along with two other members of the Royal Marines Reserve Scotland squad – Lt Col Richard Parvin and Sgt Gordon Macrae – were selected for the RN/RM Telemark Team to compete at the Inter-Services Snow Sports Championships in Meribel.

Sgt Macrae came second overall and Mne Dobie third overall, also taking the best newcomer award.

It was the second time that RMR Scotland – bolstered by ranks from RMR Mersey and Bristol – sent personnel to the Austrian event, with many having limited experience of Telemarking.

The oldest form of skiing, Telemark combines elements of Alpine and Nordic skiing and



● Sgt Gordon Macrae in action

is named after the region in Norway where it originated.

After a week of instruction and practice, a qualification race for novices saw Mne Dobie qualify for the British Championship race the following week.

A development sprint saw Marines Wiseman, Gallagher and Clutton finish second, eighth and 15th respectively, in a field of 60.

In the Championship races RMR Scotland put in the strongest performance of any single unit at the event.

It was also at this point that



● Mne Dobie with his silverware and medals

Mne Dobie became a minor celebrity by finishing inside the top 20 from a field of over 80.

Even the GB team were becoming concerned at how fast Mne Dobie was and his machine-like approach to competitive skiing, as he was registering the same times as the GB Development squad.

The Mountain Race, an open event to all three Services and civilians followed the Championship races. It is a relay race where teams skate along, skin up and then ski down a

mountain.

As mountain and Arctic warfare specialists, this race was dominated by the Royal Marines. The final result saw RMR Scotland B winning the race with RMR Scotland A finishing second and a team from Commando Training Centre finishing third to complete an all-Royal Marines podium.

RMR Scotland A team then won the best overall RN team across the Championships.

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Powerful show

A NEWCOMER to powerlifting, Royal Marine John Hall, took the 90kg title at the Royal Navy Powerlifting Championships.

Twenty-three athletes took part in the contest at HMS Neptune in Scotland, with a number of new faces joining the veterans for the three lifts – squat, benchpress and deadlift – which comprise powerlifting.

Runner-up to Mne Hall was LET Alex Thomson of HMS Vigilant with a total of 557.5kg, including the heaviest bench press of the day at 152.5kg.

Five men contested the 100kg category with PO(MA) Chris Martin from HMS Vigilant succeeding with a total of 615kg, including the heaviest lift of the day – a 255kg deadlift. He also received the Combined Service Colours on the day for his contribution to powerlifting over the last seven years.

In the 125kg category the massive Ben Williams of HMS Sultan made a staggering effort despite being unwell from the outset with the heaviest squat of the day – 250kg for a new RN record.

Six men contested the 75kg category with Royal

Marines Cpl Jason Thomson taking the title. He achieved a total of 545kg, including a double-bodyweight benchpress of 145kg.

Runner-up was Mne Craig McIvor with 457.5kg while Cpl Matt Robb finished third with 440kg.

Three contestants took part in the 82.5kg category with L/Cpl Carl Harris from 43 Cdo winning with a total of 540kg, while Mne Alex Carruthers finished second with 490kg.

In the 55.5kg category, representing the Army, was Leonora Brajshori, who managed 282.5kg, including an impressive 62.5kg benchpress.

LPT Regaina Cawley of HMS Sultan achieved 297.5kg in the 63kg category, smiling her way through a mighty 140kg deadlift.

Representing the Royal Navy Reserve, Laura Huckvale's total of 310kg included new Royal Navy records for all three disciplines.

For more information on Royal Navy Powerlifting and future events check the website <https://sites.google.com/site/rnpowerlifting/> or find us on Facebook; Royal Navy Powerlifting Association; RNPA.



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Nearly right for Price

TRAVEL problems dogged an invitation for a fighter from HMS Collingwood to compete in a boxing show in Guernsey.

LH Liam Price and coach POPT Daz Hoare were booked on a 14.25 flight from Southampton but because of mechanical problems the delayed flight didn't arrive until 7pm – 30 minutes after the weigh-in.

Fortunately LH Price was right on the button when he was weighed in, giving him time to prepare for the show at the St Pierre Park hotel in St Peter Port.

Price proved a strong opponent for Polish-born Tomaz Kot in the early stages, taking the first round. The second round saw both fighters acting

cagey and ending up even. The third and final round started well for Price as he threw a number of combinations.

With 30 seconds left Price was caught on the chin and had a standing count. The judges gave the round, and therefore the fight, to Kot.

POPT Hoare said: "This was a fantastic achievement for a Collingwood boxer. To be able to travel so far at short notice and to battle against the travel disruptions, Liam displayed true Naval core values. Liam is a real credit to the Royal Navy and HMS Collingwood."

Price now faces the Eastern Championships while it is hoped a boxing squad from Collingwood will compete in next year's Guernsey event.

Kit victory for football team

ROYAL Navy footballers have been presented with a new sporting kit to cement a new partnership with a fitness and leisure centre.

The Royal Navy's Western Region Command Football team has a new strip, courtesy of the Saltash-based China Fleet Country Club which has agreed a three-year sponsorship deal – the first fruits of a charitable partnership. The team is also

supported by the RNRMC.

LH Chris Billings, manager of the Plymouth-based football team, said: "The next aim is too take the football team overseas and represent the Royal Navy and our region to the best of our ability."

Dean Bennett, China Fleet Managing Director, said: "It's a great privilege to be able to sponsor the Plymouth Command Navy Football Team."